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## ILLUSTRATED

## PAST & PRESENT

No.61

JUNE 1993

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# MILITARY ILLUSTRATED

□ PAST & PRESENT □

No. 61

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Our front cover illustration shows the Croatian-Dalmatian Ban Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić, 1402: see detailed caption on page 15.

## 10 *New South Wales Lancers, 1885-1928*

ROBERT WELLINGTON

## 14 *Croatia in the Medieval Period, 9th-14th Centuries*

VELIMIR VUKSIC and DICK FISCHER

## 20 *The Virginia Militia, Early 17th Century*

KEITH ROBERTS Painting by RICHARD HOOK

## 26 *Battlefields from the Air*

MIKE and JENNY McCORMAC

## 27 *King James' Foot: Sedgemoor, 1685*

JOHN TINCEY

## 31 *The 95th (Rifle) Regiment of Foot*

NEIL LEONARD

## 35 *SS-Feldgendarmarie*

GORDON WILLIAMSON

## 38 *'Samaritans in Emerald Green Chevrons'*

JOHN P. LANGELLIER

On the Screen .....8 The Auction Scene .....9

Book Reviews.....30

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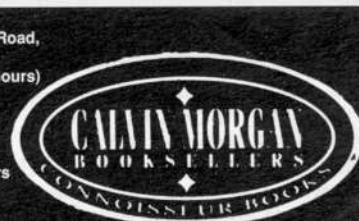
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# ON THE SCREEN

## Video releases to buy:

**December 7th (Watershed: E)**  
**The Seeds of War and The Ambitions of Dictators (Watershed: E)**  
**The Battle of Russia Part One and Two (Watershed: E)**  
**The Memphis Belle (Watershed: E)**

WATERSHED HAVE released under the generic title *WWII* a series of American television programmes which were originally broadcast as *Hollywood Goes to War* in 1990. They consist mainly of classic World War II documentaries made by Hollywood directors, each introduced by Frank Capra Jr.

The first programme is devoted to John Ford. Titled *December 7th*, the tape actually contains four of his documentaries, shown in their entirety. Capra explains how in 1934 Ford had attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander in the Navy reserve. He formed a friendship with Commander Ellis Zacharias, head of Intelligence in the Eleventh Naval District based at San Diego. While sailing in Mexican waters on his ketch *Araner*, Ford would watch and make notes on Japanese shipping, which were duly reported to Zacharias. In 1940, Ford created the Naval Field Photographic Reserve, enlisting personnel who included the noted Hollywood photographer Gregg Tolland.

One week after the bombing of Pearl Harbour, Ford and his crew arrived to make a documentary called *December the 7th*. There was little film of the actual attack, necessitating the use of reconstruction and model-work. The original cut lasted some 90 minutes and heavily criticised both the Navy and the government. Ford was obliged to cut the critical material: the film was re-edited by Robert Parrish down to its final running time of about 20 minutes. Nonetheless, when the film was released in November 1943 it won an Academy Award for best documentary.

Ford and his team were

A scene from 'Hollywood Goes to War'.

mobilised by 'Wild' Bill Donovan of the Office of Strategic Services. In May 1942, Ford was asked to go to Midway Island in anticipation of a battle in that vicinity. Ford and cameraman Jack McKenzie filmed the bombing of the island on newly available 16mm Kodachrome colour stock. Although badly wounded in the left arm during the filming, Ford obtained some striking footage. *The Battle of Midway* was narrated by Ford regulars Henry Fonda, Donald Crisp and Jane Darnell, and was again edited by Robert Parrish. It was released theatrically by Republic Pictures and won a 1942 Academy Award for best documentary.

The tape includes Ford's first film for the military, a rarely seen official training film called *Sex Hygiene* (1941), produced under the auspices of the US Army Signal Corps. It shows GIs watching a film about the dangers of venereal diseases, their prevention and their cure.

This is followed by Ford's *This is Korea* (1951), made when Ford was back in the civilian reserve as a Rear Admiral. It shows elements of the First Marine Division and the Seventh Fleet in action after the retreat from the Chosin Reservoir. Shot in colour, it well conveys the nature of the fighting in cold weather and across rugged terrain. The war is justified by the sight of refugees fleeing the communists. It is narrated by actor John Ireland and ends with the line, 'Remember Us and Good Luck'.

Lastly, the tape curiously includes *Soldiers in Greasepaint*, a documentary about the morale-boosting role played by Hollywood actors and actresses who went overseas to entertain the troops, often near the front line. It is narrated by actress Celeste Holme, and has nothing whatsoever to do with John Ford!

In *The Seeds of War and the Ambitions of Dictators*, Frank Capra introduces the first three films made by his father in the famous *Why We Fight* documen-

tary series. In 1941, successful Hollywood director Frank Capra Sr volunteered his services to the US Army Signal Corps. With the rank of major, he became head of the newly formed 834th Photo Signals Detachment, under the direct control of General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the US war effort. Marshall and Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson requested a series of documentaries to be used in orientation courses for new soldiers. The result was the seven-part *Why We Fight* series, produced between 1942 and 1945.

The first part, *Prelude to War*, established the pattern that was used throughout the series. It explained the causes leading to American involvement in World War II using a combination of newsreel, captured footage, reconstruction, clips from feature films and animated maps from the Disney studios. Actor Walter Huston (father of director John) delivered the narration which contrasts the free world with the slave world dominated by Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito. American policies of isolationism and demobilisation are criticised. There is film of the Japanese invasions of Manchuria, and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. Roosevelt insisted that it be shown theatrically: it shared the Academy Award for best documentary with *The Battle of Midway*.

The second part, *The Nazis Strike*, traces German ambitions back to Bismarck in 1863, Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1914 and Hitler from 1933. It compares Hitler to Genghis Khan, and describes how his dream of dominating the 'world island' depends on control of Eastern Europe. Film of Fascist rallies in Washington illustrates the activities of Fifth Columnists. The narration describes Hitler's occupation of the Rhineland, the building of the Siegfried Line, the annexation of Austria and the Czech Sudetenland. Hitler's guarantees of an end to territorial ambitions prove worthless, he invades Czechoslovakia and Poland. Britain and France finally realise the futility of their policies of appeasement: the film ends with voice of Churchill and a rendition of *Onward Christian Soldiers*.

The Russo-German pact is only briefly mentioned, as is the Russian invasion of Poland, which is portrayed as a justifiable manoeuvre by the Russian army to meet the threat from Hitler, rather than a cynical invasion of a hereditary enemy.

Part three, *Divide and Conquer*, begins with the mobilisation of the British and Commonwealth armies followed by Hitler's invasions of Denmark and Norway. The Maginot Line is outflanked as the Germans break through Holland, Belgium and the Ardennes forest. There is film of Germans taking Fort Eben Emael, and columns of refugees met by the advancing Allied armies. The majority of the British army escapes at Dunkirk,

but Italy invades France in the south. France capitulates, but Charles de Gaulle vows to continue the fight.

Part four of *Why We Fight*, *The Battle of Britain*, is not included in the Watershed releases. However, part five, *The Battle of Russia*, is presented in two parts on one tape. In common with the later films in the series, the film was directed by Anatole Litvak. Litvak was born in Kiev, arrived in Hollywood in 1937, and was later to direct war movies like *Night of the Generals* (1967). The score was by Dimitri Tiomkin, another Russian emigré, who had arrived in America in 1925 and been naturalised in 1937. His knowledge and love of Russian music is evident in the film.

The film begins with a description of Russian history, illustrated with clips from Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky* (1938) and Petrov's *Peter the Great* (1937). The remainder deals with the German invasion of Greece and Yugoslavia, and the initial German successes up to the siege of Moscow. Part two deals with the reverses suffered by the Germans, particularly the sieges of Leningrad and Stalingrad.

Both parts were released theatrically, and made considerable impact with some remarkable combat footage. Capra had obtained this footage by personally visiting the Russian embassy in Washington on several occasions, acts which led to an official reprimand. The film was released with a section dealing with the Russian invasion of Finland, Latvia, Estonia and Livonia deleted. Stalin and communism are barely mentioned, the stress being on the heroic struggle of the Russian people. Parts six and seven of the series, *The Battle of China* and *War Comes to America* are not included in the Watershed releases.

The last tape in the series contains two famous colour documentaries made by Hollywood director William Wyler. *The Memphis Belle* (1944) deals with the 25th and final mission by a B-17 bomber during a daylight raid by the Eighth Air Force over Germany in 1943. Originally, another B-17 had been chosen, but was shot down before the film was completed. Major Wyler trained as a waist-gunner and accompanied several missions to obtain his footage.

The tape includes *Thunderbolt* (1944), about a squadron of Twelfth Air Force P-47 Thunderbolt fighter-bombers based in Corsica. Their role was to strafe and dive-bomb, particularly in those situations where strategic bombing had proved ineffective. As Thunderbolts were single-seaters, cameras were mounted on the aircraft, with remarkable results. Wyler was invalided home with ear damage while shooting additional combat footage. With between two and five historically important films on each tape, these releases represent exceptional value for money.

Stephen J. Greenhill





READERS OF THIS and similar columns must occasionally wonder if auction sales of militaria, arms and armour are only held in London, the Home Counties and Birmingham. Whilst it is true that the majority of such specialist sales are in these locations there are many auctioneers scattered across Great Britain who may include a few items of arms and armour in their sales. The Automobile Association publishes a booklet entitled *Town & Country Auctions in Great Britain* by Eric Green which lists dozens of British auction houses arranged under counties. It is a publication that might well repay a browse through if you are a collector who cannot always attend London auctions.

It is probably every collector's dream that one day, in some obscure country sale, there will be a real 'sleeper', something that has not been recognised by the auctioneer for its true value. Alas the chances of this happening grow progressively less as time goes by. Local auctioneers are well aware of this possibility and their experience will give them a feeling that this object might be worth checking on, while there is so much reliable information in print that it is not too difficult to identify objects. Most auctioneers will also know somebody they can contact for advice if they feel there is a possibility that this lot might just be worth spending some time on. They usually know a dealer who can help and they, in turn, can pass along the query to a specialist and in the event that the piece is something a little special, word of its existence is already circulating.

In addition to the mutual contact system there is the trade press.

## THE AUCTION SCENE

Well established trade papers such as *Antique Trades Gazette* carry notices of forthcoming auctions all over the country. Any reference, however brief, that promises even the slightest chance of something good will soon have the dealers ringing up for details. Dealers may also have their local contacts and a very efficient intelligence service soon passes along any hopeful tips. There are also specialist services that, for a fee, will scan the press and advise their clients of anything that might be of interest. Many a dealer or collector has thought at some time that there was a killing to be made but on arrival at the sale found half the trade present!

There is a popular misconception that arms and armour will probably cost less in local sales. In general this does not seem to work and run-of-the-mill items such as bayonets, military swords and similar pieces will often sell for more than at specialist auctions.

All this cautionary advice does

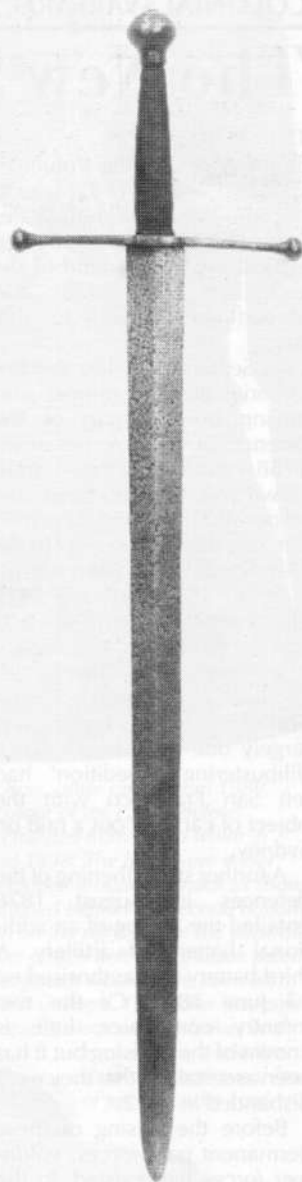
*Typical silver hilted smallswords of the mid-18th century. Left: The hilt carries London assay marks for 1766 and the maker's mark of Mark Bock. It has a plain diamond section blade and as the tip is damaged the estimate is only £350-£500. Right: The blade is gilded and decorated with military trophies and it retains its original scabbard. The maker is Cullum, a famous London maker, and it is hall marked for 1762. Estimate £800-£1,200.*

not mean that the sleeper will never surface — it can and does, very occasionally, happen. Swords from the Sudan bear a superficial resemblance to swords of the Middle Ages and in the past were frequently described as Crusaders' swords. One collector answered an advert offering a Crusader's sword for sale and went along expecting the usual Sudanese sword only to find that it really was a mediaeval sword. Collectors and dealers continue to look but it is more in hope than expectation.

There has been no need to go looking far for material recently for there has been a positive flood of good sales. Christies sale of Modern Sporting Guns and Vintage firearms on 24 March produced a record price and demonstrated the value of association. Annie Oakley, a crack shot with Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, presented one of her Winchester rifles to a British fan which came up for sale and fetched an astonishing £84,000. Without the attached plaque and authentication such a weapon would have sold for a tiny fraction of this figure. It is interesting to note that the .44 W.C.F. 1873 Winchester lever action 'rifle' was in fact smooth bored and fired shot cartridges which would have made some of the trick shooting far less difficult than it might have appeared to the spectator.

Christies were holding one of their very fine sales of antique arms and armour on 31 March which was to include a range of armour, edged weapons and firearms. The 310 lots included a number of fine Japanese swords and the following day, 1 April, Sotheby's were offering the Sir Francis Festing collection of Japanese swords and fittings. Estimates, particularly for the Festing material, were high and one blade was quoted as £100,000 to £150,000. Japanese swords and sword fittings are very much a specialist field and prices continue to rise.

For the medal collector the Sotheby sale at Billingshurst on 5 April offered a wide range of items including many good quality Imperial German and Third Reich pieces. The lots included a Luftwaffe Honour Goblet estimated at £800-£1,000 as well as an unusual quantity of documents. This sale was to be followed by a sale of militaria and arms and armour — the first since the reorganisation of the department. It will be interesting to see how it turns out. There are some most interesting items including an incredible silver Pickelhaube presentation piece. The same catalogue covers a sale of Modern and Vintage Sporting Guns to be held at Sotheby's in London on 15 April. Despite its title this sale also includes a number of very fine antique firearms which feature some of the finest guns produced



*Plain and typical of a late mediaeval fighting sword with a hilt which would permit it to be used in one hand but large enough for a two-handed grip for a more powerful swing. The grip has been replaced. Estimate £2,000-£2,500. (All photographs courtesy Phillips.)*



by the London gunmaker Charles Lancaster, renowned for his barrel making skills. This number of his four-barrelled weapons will probably never be seen together again.

To continue this run of sales Phillips had one of arms and armour on 7 April. Among the wide range of lots was an Enigma code machine. By cracking this ingenious cipher system the Allies were able to learn, often before some local commanders, details of some of the Third Reich's military secrets. It was one of the best kept secrets of World War II and now one of the machines is on offer at an estimate of £500-£700!

Finally, there was the 50th London Arms Fair on 23 and 24 April to round off a pretty full month for collectors and dealers.

**Frederick Wilkinson**



# The New South Wales Lancers, 1885-1928

THE FORMATION, in New South Wales, of the Volunteer Cavalry Corps in 1885, later to become the New South Wales Lancers, needs to be viewed against the background of the conditions in Australia and abroad at, and prior to, that date.

In September 1870 the last Imperial garrison troops, after having been a part of the defence of the colonies since 1788, were withdrawn from New South Wales and the responsibility for its own defence was passed over to the New South Wales government.

In late 1870 and early 1871 efforts were made to raise a permanent paid force, one battery of artillery and two companies of infantry. The speedy formation of the artillery battery was largely due to rumours that a 'filibustering expedition' had left San Francisco with the object of carrying out a raid on Sydney.

A further strengthening of the defences in August 1876 entailed the raising of an additional battery of artillery. A third battery was authorised on 13 June 1877. Of the two infantry companies, little is known of their raising but it has been ascertained that they were disbanded in 1872.

Before the raising of these permanent paid forces, volunteer forces had existed. In the early 1850s the New South Wales government had obtained permission from the Imperial government to raise volunteer troops. In 1854, with England becoming embroiled in the Crimean War, the colonists were stimulated into raising a rifle regiment, a troop of yeomanry and a battery of artillery. This requirement was brought about by the fact that, with the distance from the mother country and the lack of sufficient Imperial forces, the colony would be practically helpless in the event of an attack by a hostile nation.

The rifle regiment, titled the Volunteer Sydney Rifle Corps, later changed to the First Sydney Battalion of Rifle

ROBERT WELLINGTON

**DISTINGUISHING THEMSELVES** in action during the Boer War and earning several battle honours during World War I, the New South Wales Lancers were an élite body of men who prided themselves on their training and discipline as much as on their uniforms.

Volunteers, was raised in 1854. The soldiers provided their own uniforms and accoutrements, in dark green trimmed with black.

In 1854 a battery of artillery was also formed, but for various reasons, chief among which was the lack of suitable officers, this was disbanded in 1856. Also in 1854 a troop of cavalry was raised which mustered 28 troopers. In 1855, a sham fight between this troop and members of the 12th (Suffolk) Regiment, the current Imperial garrison troops, and the Sydney Volunteer Rifles resulted in the

cavalry being routed, and as a consequence they were severely criticised. This led to their subsequent disbandment.

For many reasons the early efforts of the volunteers were not very successful and when the Crimean War ended interest waned so much that the Corps became a mere nucleus. However, in 1859, with the outbreak of the Maori Wars in New Zealand, attention was again drawn to the absence of control by the state over the Imperial troops garrisoned here. As in 1849, all available Imperial troops were

despatched to New Zealand, leaving the colony practically helpless once again.

In 1860 an Act was passed which allowed for drill instructors to be appointed to volunteer units and a fee was granted to supply uniforms and accoutrements. As a result of the Act a troop of Mounted Rifles was formed which appeared to include some of the volunteer cavalry of 1855. An amount of ten thousand pounds was voted for volunteer purposes in New South Wales, quickly reviving interest in the volunteer movement.

In 1863 a strength return of the volunteer corps in New South Wales showed the post-ed strength of the Mounted Rifles to be 39 all ranks and the total of all volunteers to be 1,774. However, in 1864, interest again began to waver until in 1867 the Volunteer Force Regulation Act was passed in Parliament granting



Second Lieutenant Walter Liberty Vernon, Sydney Lancers, August 1886. Vernon commanded the NSW Lancers from 1903 to 1906; his son, Hugh Venables, from 1921 to 1926; and his grandson, Phillip Venables, from 1951 to 1952 — quite a family record!





Full Dress, officers, from 1889. The tunic was of a reddish-brown tweed with scarlet plastron, collar and cuffs, and lined with silver lace.



The white, dragoon-style helmet worn by the lancers from 1885 until 1889. The Sydney and Parramatta Squadrons continued to wear the helmet, complete with a red puggaree, until at least 1895. The badge is of the New South Wales Military Forces' design.

Full Dress, other ranks, from 1889. The colour of the cap or helmet lines changed from red to white in around 1898. The lines were either worn looped around the neck as shown, or buttoned behind the second bottom button on the right side of the plastron. A white pouch belt with a black patent leather pouch would have been worn with this uniform. The jacket was piped with scarlet cloth on the sleeves and back seams, while the shoulder cords were made of treble scarlet cord.





50 acres of the best land to all volunteers with five years' service. This system of land grants proved unsatisfactory though, as far as the colonial authorities were concerned, as the grantees in many cases simply sold their land to the highest bidder. The granting of land was abolished in 1874 and recruiting once again declined. Later, in 1878, these forces were reorganised into militia on a partially paid basis.

World events and developments in Australia's near north caused considerable public concern during the latter part of the 19th century. The unrest in Russia following the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny of 1857 caused deep concern among responsible circles. The 1860s saw the rise of Prussia, culminating in the Franco-Prussian War. With the defeat of France in 1871 the Hohenzollern Empire became firmly established. After 1870, the rapidity with which German annexations occurred in Africa and the Pacific region, suggesting considerable premeditation, became a major concern, not only to Britain, but also the colonies situated in and around those areas. In 1884 German colonies were established in the Solomons and New Guinea. German moves in these regions caused considerable alarm in the Australian colonies and prior to German annexation of New Guinea, Queensland annexed Papua on 4 April 1883, it finally becoming a British protectorate on 6 November 1884. The period 1870 to 1880 also saw defence works on the Australian mainland, particularly around the major ports, receiving much attention.

It was into this atmosphere

*Major Malcolm Melville McDonald, CO of the NSW Cavalry Reserves and later Lieutenant-Colonel as CO of the NSW Cavalry Regiment and, 1893-96, CO NSW Mounted Brigade. He had commanded the Poona Horse in 1847.*

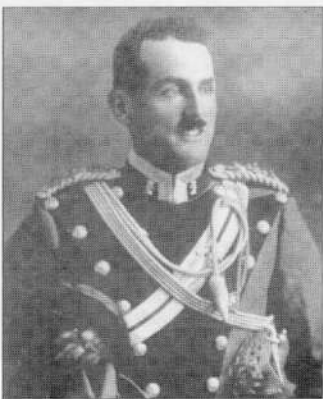


*Trooper W. Muston, a member of 'K' Troop (Parramatta) wearing Full Dress with the white dragoon-style helmet, circa 1891-92. He was one of the original members of his Troop, enlisting on 6 June 1891.*

that, in 1884, Robert Roland Thompson arrived in Australia from New Zealand. A one-time sergeant in the 4th Dragoon Guards, he had promoted the formation of the Dunedin Hussars in New Zealand. Together with Malcolm Melville Macdonald, a veteran of the Indian frontier fighting who had commanded the Poona Horse in Upper Scinde and Buluchistan in 1847, now living in Sydney, Roland was responsible for forming the nucleus of cavalry in New South Wales. On 3 January 1885 the corps was officially gazetted under the title of the Sydney Light Horse.

January 1885 also saw the fall of Khartoum in the Sudan and the offer by the New South Wales Government to supply reinforcements to aid the British cause. On 3 March 1885 the Sydney Light Horse provided the escort to Governor Loftus at the departure of the Sudan contingent, which consisted of one battery of field artillery and one infantry battalion. This was the light horse troop's first public appearance and this date, 3 March, is maintained each year as the regiment's birthday. The uniforms worn at this time were blue. The display of good horse flesh and martial mien aroused much enthusiasm amongst some visitors from country areas. Between 1885 and 1889 troops began to spring up wherever a leader arose. All of these

*Captain E.D. Hordern, 7th Australian Light Horse Regiment (NSW Lancers) circa 1914. He is in the officers' pattern Full Dress uniform which was issued from 1906.*



troops were independent units, each attempting to dress and equip themselves in uniforms both distinctive and yet quite unlike that of other troops, the whole being administered under Captain Macdonald as Commandant of the Cavalry Brigade Reserves.

*Lieutenant Thomas Foster Knox, Sydney Lancers. The uniform is the Drill Order, worn between 1885 and 1889. Knox joined the Lancers as a corporal on 18 February 1885 and retired in 1902 as Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel.*



With the return of the Sudan contingent in August 1885 the Sydney Light Horse again escorted the Governor. Colonel Richardson, Commander of the New South Wales Military Forces, brought back from the Sudan two lances which had been presented to him by the 9th Bengal Lancers. One of the first official acts on his return was to convert the Sydney Light Horse Troop into lancers. A change of uniform was therefore required. The new uniforms were based on that of the 5th Royal Irish Lancers, a unit which had itself only been reformed in January 1858. The uniforms were ordered from London and paid for by members of the corps. The unit was renamed the Sydney Lancers, and pending the arrival of lances from abroad, the troop drilled with bamboo fishing rods. Within a few years all the independent cavalry troops were armed with lances.

On 12 December 1885 Lord Carrington became Governor of New South Wales. A former cavalry officer himself, he took a keen interest in the local cav-



alry and became their honorary colonel, a position he held, even after he had returned to England, until his death in 1928. When the independent light horse troops were organised in 1889 into a regiment, styled the New South Wales Regiment of Volunteer Cavalry, Lord Carrington agreed to the use of his family's crest, the elephant's head with coronet, in the regimental badge. This was displayed on crossed lances, with sprays of waratah, the floral emblem of the colony. He also agreed to the use of the Carrington family motto 'Tenax in Fide' (Steadfast in Faith). The collar badge was the Carrington crest alone. The crest and motto have continued in use, with only minor alterations, on regimental badges until this day.

The year 1889 saw other changes. Under General Order 223 of 5 November 1889 the blue uniform of the Sydney Lancers was discontinued and the brown uniform for the whole of the NSW Cavalry was adopted and supplied by the Government. In the journal *Young Australia*, dated September 1889, mention was made of the New South Wales Cavalry '...This regiment is to be armed with lances and 500 of these weapons have been ordered.' From 1 January 1890 the cavalry regiment was placed on the partially paid establishment.

This certainly represented a change in government attitude towards cavalry troops in New South Wales from that adopted in the original official recognition of the corps' existence, as gazetted on 3 January 1885, where it stated that '...the members thereof [will] receive no assistance from the Government beyond being furnished with Arms (Sabres and Rifles), Cavalry Bridles and Saddle Clothes...'

While some financial backing was available, throughout the 1890s general public and political apathy towards the development of military forces continued. When politically convenient, the regiment was used for a variety of purposes, mainly escorting the Governor and other ceremonial appearances, by the New South Wales Government. Even the outbreak of the South African War, in 1899, had limited impact. Certainly it gave more responsible citizens food for thought, but Australia was remote from the scene of action. The minds of the politicians and public were more upon the problems of Federation than defence. It is

significant that even after 1903, when the new Commonwealth Government took over all state forces, there was little concern about the state of the defence forces in Australia as a whole. In fact, Lord Kitchener's recommendations in 1910 for the reorganisation of the Commonwealth Military Forces were not actually put into effect until 1912, and even then progress was very slow.

The year 1891 saw the raising of a mounted regimental band, which was to become a much admired unit at ceremonial occasions leading up to and after 1914. Members of the regiment contributed to the costs of raising and equipping the band. The strength was set at twenty men and one Kettle Drummer. The kettle drums were furnished with bannerettes, edged with silver lace and a silver and red fringe and embroidered in silver with the regimental badge. The two earlier sets were crimson but around 1900 a magnificent pair, of scarlet cloth, with the badge very heavily embroidered upon them, was presented by the daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Burns, then Commanding Officer of the Regiment.

The 1890s also saw the growth, and increasing effectiveness, of united union power in New South Wales. The great maritime strike of 1890 posed problems for the law authorities in maintaining order and controlling violence on picket lines set up to prevent the movement of all goods and supplies. Police numbers were insufficient for the task. As a result the Illawarra Troop, and members of Sydney Troop, of the regiment, as well as two companies of Mounted Rifles, were approved by the Premier, Sir Henry Parkes, to be sworn in as special constables. They were dressed in police uniforms and for two months were camped at Dawes Point, near the Sydney Docks. Their main duties were to escort the wagons of non-union drivers to and from the wharves. Union reaction against the use of the military to break strikes not only aroused fury at the time, but was later reflected in objections to clauses of the Federal Constitution pertaining to defence and the use of the military in times of civil unrest.

The reputation of the regiment was enhanced, within Australia and overseas, as a result of visits to England by three detachments. In 1893, a team of 18 men competed with representatives of the British

Army at the annual military tournaments at Islington and Dublin. In 1897 a detachment was sent to partake in the celebrations marking Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. In 1899 a squadron went to train with the British regular cavalry at Aldershot. These trips were made at the expense of the individual members, assisted by the Regiment as a whole and its supporters. Although no government expenditure was involved, the team in 1893, and the squadron in 1899, sailed only after overcoming an official government attitude which barely stopped short of prohibition. This was an exhibition of government short-sightedness on the one hand and of regimental enthusiasm and dedication on the other.

The 1893 team acquitted itself very well in the tournaments, gaining eight first

places, and several other minor placings, in competition with some of Britain's finest. The team also formed part of the Queen's escort at the opening of the Imperial Institute. The Jubilee Detachment in 1897, along with Mounted Rifles and other troops from New South Wales, had the experience of rubbing shoulders and parading with troops from every corner of the empire. In reporting on the Jubilee Procession the *Daily Chronicle* described the New South Wales Lancers as '...the flower of the Procession'.

**MI**

#### To be continued

*Trooper J. McLaughlin, 7th Australian Light Horse Regiment (NSW Lancers) in July 1914 showing the Full Dress uniform which was issued from 1906.*





# Croatia in the Mediaeval Period, 9th-14th Centuries

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

THE CROATIAN TRIBES appeared on the scene of their present territory on the Balkan peninsula in the early 7th century, moving into the vacuum left by the old, decaying Roman Empire. Together with Avars and other Slavic tribes, as part of the great migration of peoples, the Croats streamed westward from the steppes behind the Carpathian mountains, in today's Ukraine and

Russia, and occupied the land of the Pannonian plain, penetrating as far west and south as the Adriatic seacoast. Here they made their home, and began to lay the foundations for their own society, nation and state.

During this time, the rest of the Balkan peninsula was taking shape under other migratory forces and military powers. Large numbers of Slovenes had migrated into the predominantly Alpine territory to Croatia's north and west, but were very soon to fall subject to Frankish

VELIMIR VUCKSIC and DICK FISCHER

FOR A BRIEF period in history, Croatia was one of the most powerful nation-states in the Balkans, but beset by enemies on all sides had to develop a highly effective army and navy. Here we look at their origins and status in the mediaeval period.

power. Other Slavic tribes had settled to the south and east of the ethnic Croatian territories, among whom the Serbs were predominant. Interestingly, of all of Croatia's neighbours

through the centuries, the Serbs — caught up with the establishment of their state amidst their own powerful neighbours — were relatively uninterested in Croatia, at least militarily (and vice versa). Although it sounds strange to those who have become accustomed to seeing Serbia and Croatia as component parts of the single state of Yugoslavia, their early histories would move these two large Slavic peoples in different directions, with differing orientation points and differing cultures.

From their arrival, the Croatian people were surrounded by larger, generally hostile, forces which always had their own designs on the territory where they had settled. In the early period of their small state they were inevitably to come to terms with the authority of Byzantium, the overlord of the Dalmatian region, to which they had to submit. Although already, sporadically, on the decline between the 9th and 12th centuries, Byzantium would remain a formidable power which was always eager to retain sovereignty over much of the Adriatic coast, territory the Croats had by then long occupied and were treating as their own. Pushing in from western Europe, Charlemagne's Franks had their own designs on the rich Sava and Drava river basins and succeeded in establishing protectorates over the Croatian clans which had settled on the Pannonian plain. Under the leadership of Duke Ljudevit, Croat settlers rose up against oppressive Frankish overlordship in 819-822, but without lasting effect. The expansive Bulgars, under Emperor Simeon, were the great Balkan power further south and east. Although they too had generally already reached the pinnacle of their expansion by the time it mattered to the Croats, they too were a major military force to be reckoned with initially.

Two other powerful neighbours were coming of age during the mediaeval period which

### Left: Warrior from Pannonian Croatia, first half of the 9th century

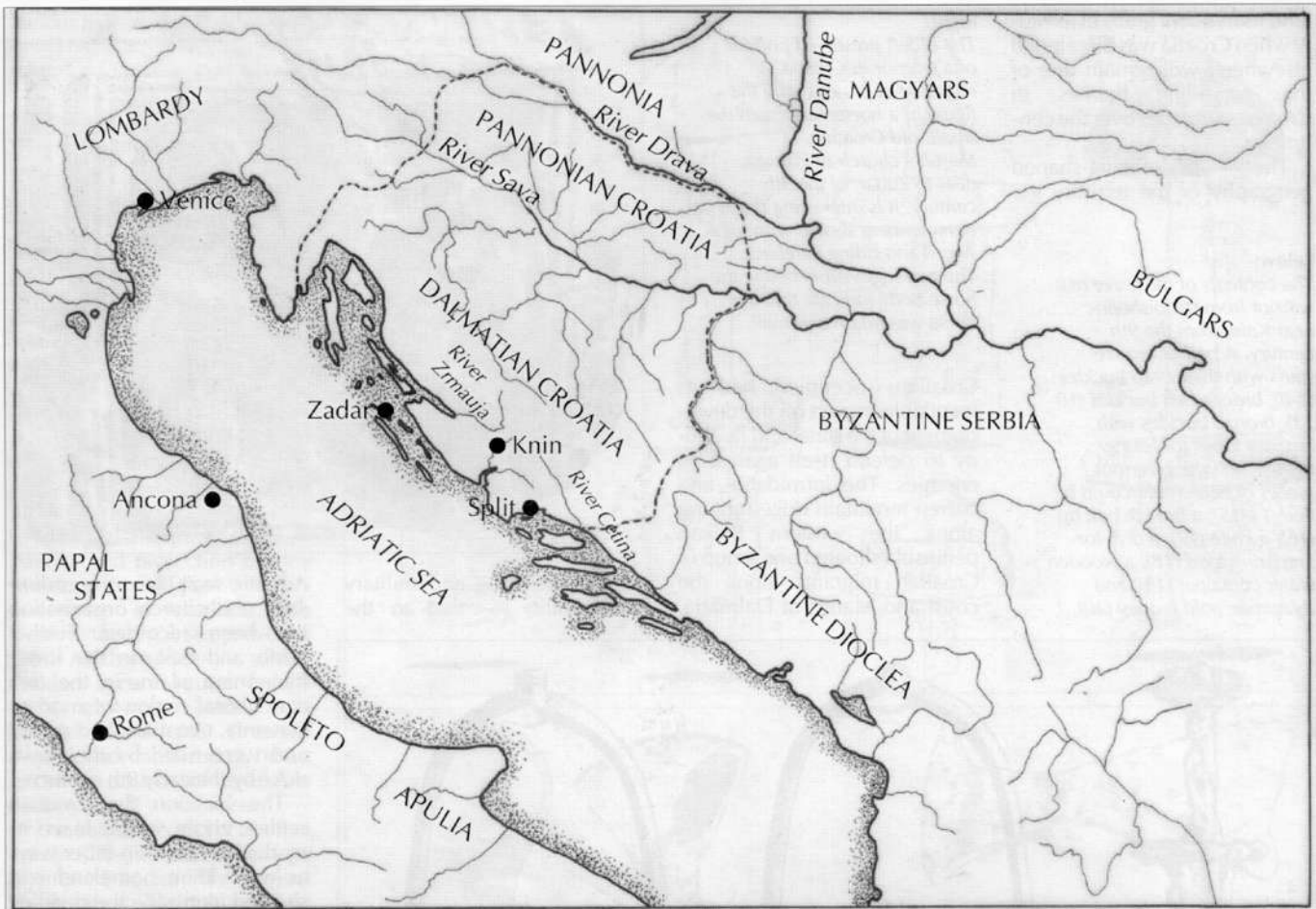
In Dalmatian Croatia the material culture of the Franks wiped out the earlier military culture of the Avars. But traces of the Avars' influence in Pannonian Croatia are located in graves dating up until the end of the 9th century. On the site of Brodski Drenovac, south of the city of Požega, a number of warrior graves have been discovered, three of which not only contain the buried warrior but also his horse in full dress.

The Pannonian warrior's most significant equipment was his belt, on which both the status and complete military descriptions of the owner are fully portrayed. Attached to the belt were a sabre, knife, a reflex (composite) bow, quiver with arrows, a salt holder, and a leather bag containing a needle, flint, striking steel, and a razor for shaving. The metal tip of the belt was specially decorative, was sometimes made from gold and could be up to 15cm long.

A large number of sabres of the type carried by these warriors have been discovered in the Danube basin. They are about 85cm long with a wooden handle wrapped in leather. Such a sabre, with its curved blade, was introduced into Europe by the second wave of Avar nomadic immigrants settling in the Avar-Slav state at the end of the 7th century. The reflex bow is the second significant cavalry weapon of Avar origin. It was carried in a pouch on the left side of the hip, while the arrows were on the right side. As a rule the tips of the arrows were three-edged. The nomadic spear tip had a very narrow three- or four-edged profile. The horse equipment was identical to that of the later Avar period.







would prove to be much more formidable and longer lasting challenges to the country's independence and very survival as a people. By the early 10th century, warlike Magyar tribes, having been forced out of Russia, were pushing in from the north and east. After over-

running and settling in the area of what is now Hungary, the Magyars went ravaging throughout central Europe before they finally directed their appetites towards Croatia. From its seat on the Danube, Hungary eventually became the Croats' uneasy overlord and ally in their

power struggle through the ensuing years.

By the 11th century the great sea power challenge was increasingly Venice, gradually replacing Byzantium as the dominant commercial force on the Adriatic sea, and throughout the Mediterranean world.

Needing to secure their rule of the seas, the Venetians had to guarantee safe passage for shipping, and were natural enemies of anyone else who — like the seafaring Croats — were in any position to threaten it. Venice's persistent designs on the Adriatic coast and islands

**FRONT COVER:**  
**Croatian-Dalmatian Ban**  
**Hrvoje Vukčić-Hrvatinić,**  
**1402.**

Hrvoje Vukčić (1350-1416) was one of the large Croatian feudal lords, holding properties in Croatia and Bosnia. In 1402 he had printed an illustrated missal (book with a collection of masses) with accompanying illustrations. Duke Hrvoje is shown in parade armour, and without his helmet, which certainly would be a part of his armour. His helmet was most likely an Italian *barbuto* or *bascinet*. Even though Croatia was constantly warring with Venice over the Dalmatian cities, the Croatian nobility and free royal cities had powerful cultural and commercial ties with the cities of northern Italy. Milano, Brescia, Perugia and other Italian cities led the way in the production of armour in Europe. Much evidence exists that the Italian trend of constantly upgrading the

armed protection of the warrior was being continually followed in Croatia. On a wooden choir bench in St Francis' church, which dates from 1394, there is a portrayal of St Chrysogonus in a suit of Italian armour which was very advanced for its time. There is also a likeness of Duke Hrvoje in a very modern suit of armour, showing an advance in the protection of the joints.

**BACK COVER:**  
**Warrior from Dalmatian**  
**Croatia, second half of the 9th**  
**century.**

Judging from archaeological finds, Dalmatian Croatia, which became the nucleus of the Croatian state, was exceptionally strong militarily. There, on the small area between the Zrmanja and Cetina rivers, the largest concentration of early middle age swords in Europe were discovered. This piece of information is inconclusive, because by this time the Franks had abandoned the

custom of placing weapons in graves, and the old Christian peoples had never practiced that. Nevertheless, the custom was still being practised in all Slavic states as far away as Scandinavia. Swords of Croatian warriors were of the Frankish Carolingian shape and type. Almost half of the swords had a recognisable handle with a small head divided into five or more sections. Eleven different subtypes of swords belonging to that category have been found in Croatia. These swords were produced in the Frankish state, but the possibility of local production cannot be excluded, however, as can be seen by examples from Russia and Moravia. Frequently found in the graves were spear tips, arrows, locally produced iron war axes, the Moravian axe and Frankish francisca. Only the eminent warrior had swords, while the infantry were armed with bows, spears and axes. For their defence they had a

round shield made of limewood about 90cm across. Thin shaped boards were covered with linen or leather. Besides the concave type, flat round shields were used as well. The shield's face was often reinforced with metal strips and was normally painted with simple or elaborate decorations. The decorative belt continued to have great meaning, as it represented a sign of dignity. Also discovered in these graves were large numbers of spurs with Frankish style decorations, with Carolingian, Frankish, Byzantine or local markings. The large number of spurs found testifies to the fact that cavalry was the attacking force of the Croatian army of that time. Neither helmets nor pieces of armour have been discovered on the territory of the early middle age Croatian state, which of course does not mean there were not any. They simply did not have the custom of placing them in their graves.



(and its frequent grabs of territory when Croatia was threatened elsewhere) will remain one of the pervading themes in Croatia's struggles over the centuries.

The boomerang-shaped geography of the territory the

#### Below:

The contents of the grave of a warrior from the bishopric near Knin, from the 9th century. A pair of bronze spurs with their strap buckles (1-8), bronze belt buckles (10-13), bronze buckles with fastener loops for leather thongs, on which various pieces of equipment could be tied (14-15), a bronze belt tip (16), a knife (17), a dish for preparing food (18), a wooden water container (19), and Byzantine gold money (20).

#### Right:

The oldest preserved portrait of a warrior in Croatia. A fragment of pluteus with the figure of a horseman. From the small, old Croatian, St Martin's church of Pidraga, near to Zadar, of the 9th century. It is interesting that the warrior is shown without a sword and riding bareback. The two legs visible below the horse body indicate that the horse was relatively small.

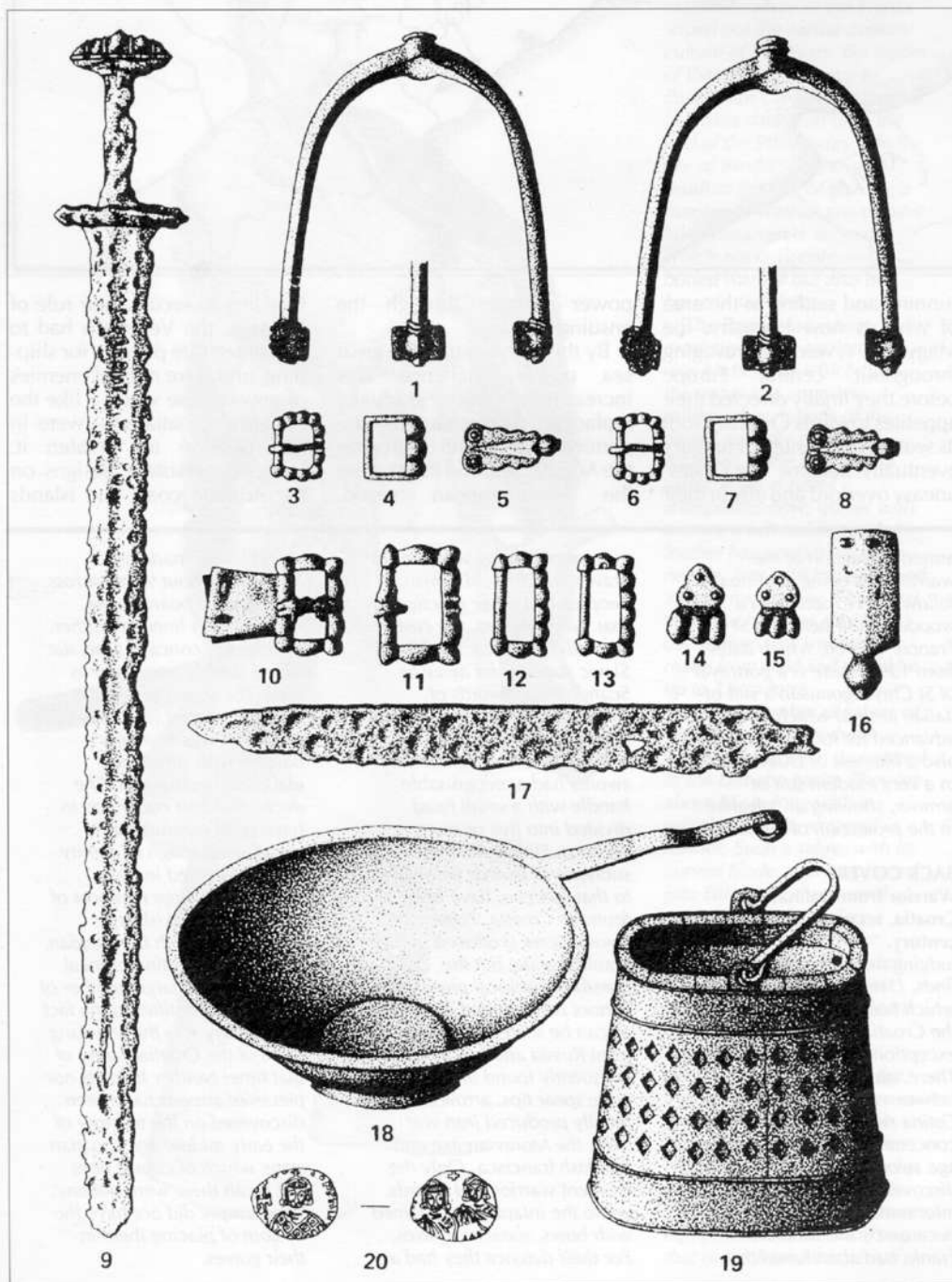


Croatians occupied had its inevitable impact on the development of the state, and its ability to defend itself against its enemies. The formidable and barren mountain ridge running along the western Balkan peninsula situated one group of Croatian migrants along the coast and islands of Dalmatia,

with interests — and military vulnerability — tied to the

Adriatic sea. There the earliest state and church organisation has been recorded. Further north and east on the lower Pannonian plain, in the rich agricultural region of modern Slavonia, Croats had settled and were ruled by their own duke by the early 9th century.

The location the Croatian settlers chose would leave its mark upon them in other ways as well. Their homeland was situated alongside the dividing line of the Roman Empire into its eastern and western divisions, with their differing world views, and opposing Church loyalties. This division, and Croatia's eventual embracing of Roman Catholicism, would prove to be extremely significant in the development of the country's orientation toward western Europe. Many centuries later, uneasily 'united' in Yugoslavia, seeds sown by these differing religious loyalties amidst peoples in such proximity had created a deep ethnic division between Croatia and its nominally Orthodox neighbours to the east. This division, when given full vent and exploited for nationalistic purposes, laid the groundwork for a bloody future centuries later. In the hands of ruling fascists of the puppet Croatian state during World War II, a ghastly ethnic policy of violence and terror would become the ugliest blot on the Croatian national soul in its whole history. And now recently, a heightened ethnic consciousness not only was the straw that broke the dysfunctional communist federation apart but gave a pretext for the widespread Serb practice of 'ethnic cleansing' and the horrendous war on the territory of ex-Yugoslavia, first in Croatia, and then in Bosnia-Herzegovina.





Various types of Frankish sword hilts, 9th and 10th centuries.

### An Adriatic sea power

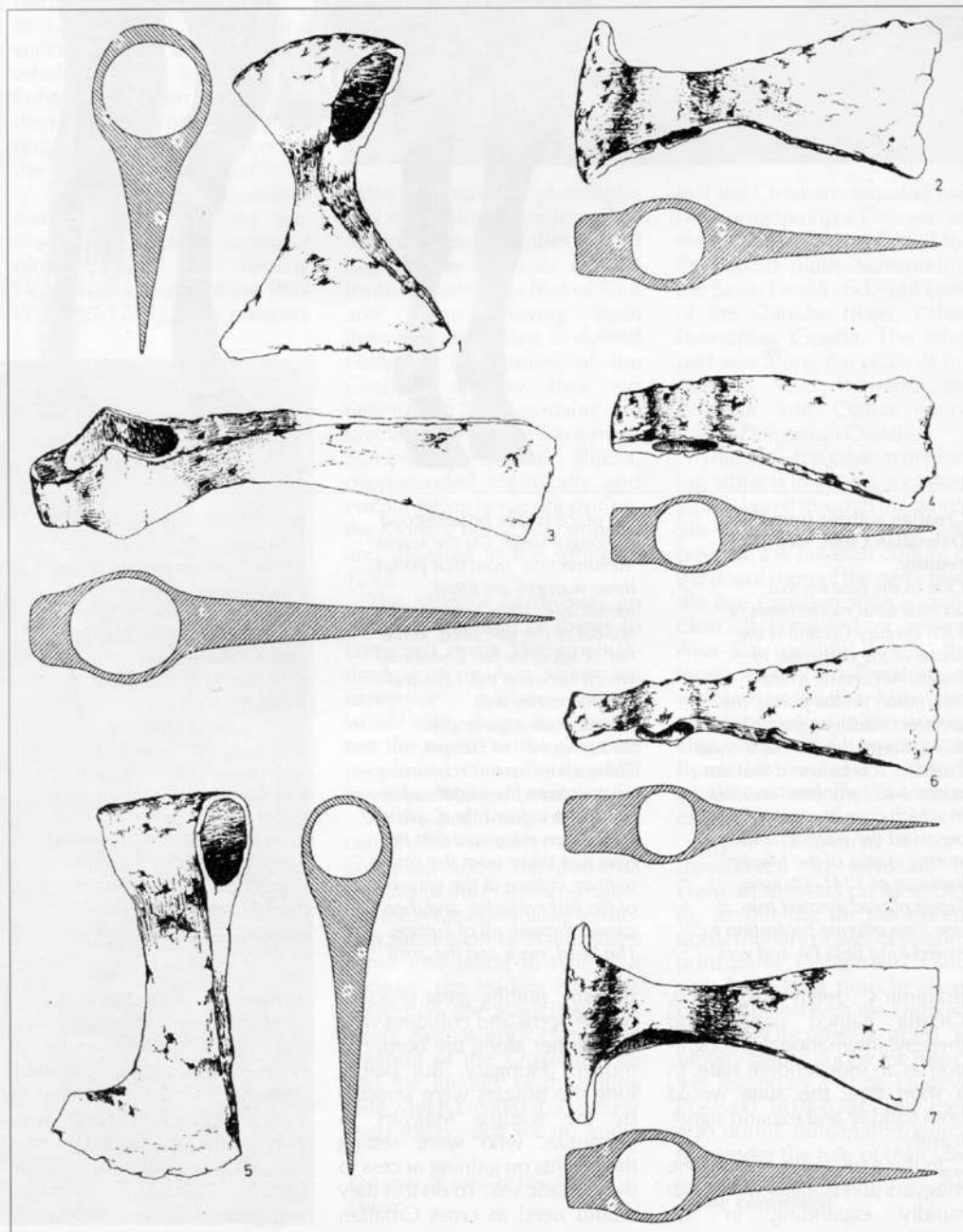
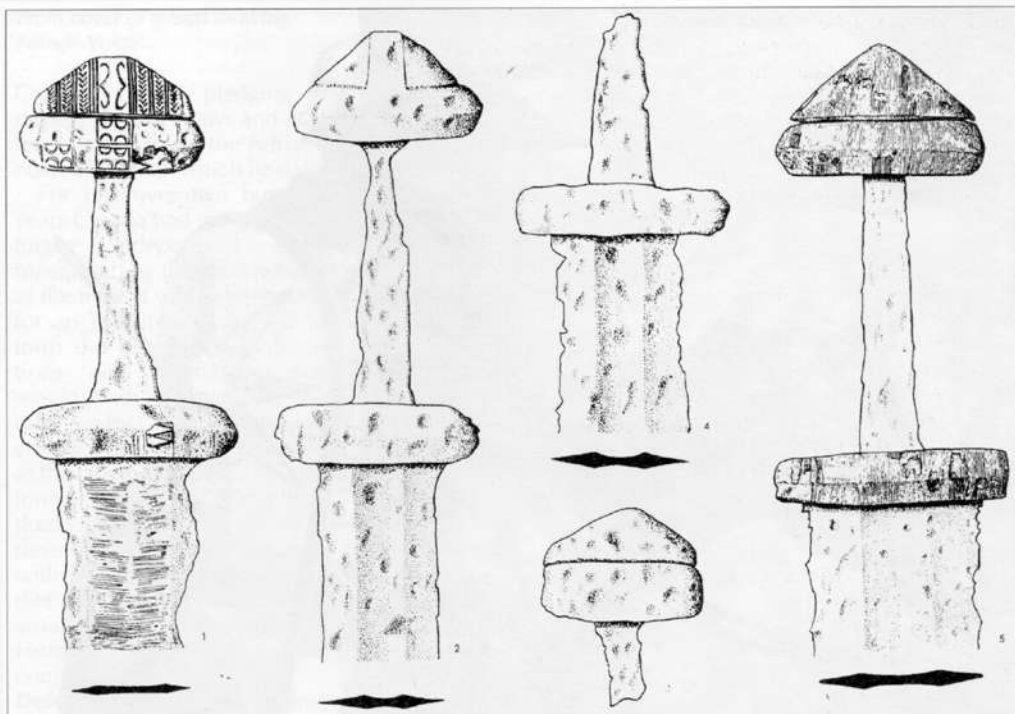
Very soon after arriving on the Dalmatian coast the Croatian settlers, having picked up navigational skills from the old Romanic inhabitants, gained a reputation as skilled sailors. They immediately occupied the Dalmatian mainland as well as the Adriatic coastal islands, which gave them virtual control of sea traffic along the eastern shore of the Adriatic sea. Particularly in the south, near the mouth of the Neretva river, Croatian sailors and pirates were increasingly able to threaten shipping, demand payoffs and protection money in return for safe passage. This put them in conflict with Venice, the great sea power of the Mediterranean, which needed secure routes for its great east-west trade, and which found the Croatian islands and coastland to be an excellent source of available timber, goods and slaves.

The earliest record of conflict was in 839-840, when the *doge* attempted to forcibly subject the southern Dalmatian coast and islands to Venice and was decisively defeated in a number of battles at sea. The years that followed saw a complex plait of interests of various sea powers — Arab Saracen pirates, Venice, Byzantium and the Dubrovnik and Narentan Croats. Under Prince Domagoj (864-876) the Croatian navy was able to exploit Arab attacks against Byzantine holdings on its Dalmatian islands, wresting them for the time being from Byzantium.

But it continued to be Venice which posed the greatest potential threat to Dalmatian Croatia. It skillfully exploited the factionalism of Croatia's nobles to gain control of Istria and the northern coastal islands in 1000, and later much other Dalmatian territory. All this resulted in ongoing see-sawing struggles of various princes and alliances with different rules to regain their lost but vital territory.

### The challenge of their neighbours

By the eighth century the Croats had their own state and nation, organised around the influence of powerful landowners, dukes and princes, one of whom was chosen to become head of state. During the first year of Prince



Different types of axes, 9th and 10th centuries.





**Croatian warrior from the Dalmatian Cities, mid-13th century.**

One of the best known architectural monuments of 13th century Croatia is the portal of the cathedral in Trogir. According to the inscription on the portal, the architect Radovan began it in 1240 during the time of Bishop Treguan. It is believed that the portal was completed in 1251, in which case its creator had observed the warriors and stormy events of the Mongol invasion of 1241-42. Here Trogir played a noted role, at one time offering protection to exiled King Bela IV, and was

the place where he withstood a Mongol siege. On the scene 'Resurrection' from that portal, three warriors are fitted identically. Their helmets are typical of the so-called 'kettle hat' (Chapel de fer, Eisenhute) which between the 13th and 15th centuries was representative generally throughout all of Europe. These show up in Croatian sources from the middle ages under the Italian title 'Capello'. It has been suggested that this type was taken from Byzantine military culture in the course of the first crusades, and then spread through all of Europe. The head, neck and the arms

of the warrior were protected by a wire shirt (mail coif), while the body was protected according to the Byzantine model by lamellate armour of iron plateles. Byzantium had a strong influence on the Dalmatian cities, as most of them, like Trogir, were under the Byzantine Empire's administration up until 1180. Archives of the Dalmatian cities are full of information about artisans (generally from Italy) who made weapons and armour. From that it can be reliably concluded that from the 13th century on, most weapons were produced locally.

Branimir's reign (879-892), Croatia gained papal, and thereby international, recognition as an independent state. In a short time this state would both solidify and expand significantly.

In the early tenth century the Magyars and Bulgars were both rapidly expanding in the

Balkans, putting great pressure on the Serbs and colliding with each other along the border of modern Hungary. But before long the Bulgars were stopped by the warlike Magyars in Pannonia, who were setting their sights on gaining access to the Adriatic sea. To do this they would need to cross Croatian

territory.

At this time Prince Tomislav, the newly installed ruler of Dalmatian Croatia, was well prepared to meet the threat of King Arpad and his Magyar warriors. As they attempted to cross the Drava river into ethnic Croatian lands, Tomislav engaged them, and decisively

defeated them there. By driving them north, forcing them back out of Croatian territory, Tomislav's forces significantly expanded the boundaries of the Croatian state. This proved a very significant move for the developing nation.

Tomislav — who was then crowned Croatia's first king — had put together a very impressive army and navy, becoming a major military power on the continent. A contemporary report from the Byzantine court indicates that at that time Croatia already had an infantry numbering 100,000 men, a cavalry of 60,000 and a navy of over 5,000 seamen. Its navy consisted of 80 large vessels with about 40 sailors, and 100 smaller boats with 10-20 sailors each — not counting warriors or rowers.

Consequently, with this kind of force at his disposal, when the Bulgar Czar Simeon continued to harass Croatia's neighbours (Serbia, Zahumlje) or oppose its allies (Byzantium), Tomislav was able to offer them genuine support. And when in 926, Simeon decided once and for all to eliminate Croatian power in the region, by sending his army under Algotur's command after them, Tomislav engaged and decisively defeated the Bulgars in north-eastern Bosnia. Tomislav's contribution to the Croatian state was not only a military one. Under his rule the land was divided into major administrative districts, and sensitive questions about church policy and authority among the Croats, as well as complex relations with Byzantium and Rome were diplomatically and peacefully settled.

**Venice again**

In 1202, when the Pope launched the fourth Crusade, the Venetians saw a chance to strengthen their grip on the eastern shore of the Adriatic sea. In need of transport, the crusade leaders agreed with the doge of Venice to transport their armies to the Holy Land for a high price. When the crusade organisers were unable to come up with the necessary gold, the doge proposed a compromise plan in which the crusaders could pay for their passage by warring against Venice's enemies, specifically the Croatian city of Zadar. The result was that the city fell to the attackers, was ravaged, and its citizens subjected to heavy tribute under humiliating terms.

It was not until much later, in 1311, under their powerful governor (*ban*), Pavao Subić, that the Croats succeeded in



retaking Zadar, only for it to soon fall again after his death. After frequent battles, it was not until 1358 that Venice was forced to sue for peace, renouncing all its claims to Dalmatia and its islands forever.

#### Twilight of a great kingdom

After a succession of various kings and dynasties, acquisitions by marriage, treaty and conquest, by the mid-11th century a stable, developing Croatian nation had reached the pinnacle of its expansion. All of what had previously bowed to Byzantium by then acknowledged Petar-Kresimir's (1058-1074) sovereignty as king of Croatia and Dalmatia.

Petar-Kresimir was succeeded as king by the *ban*, or governor, of Slavonia, Zvonimir, who, through his marriage into the Hungarian Arpad dynasty, opened the door for major changes in the future relations between these two neighbours.

Croatia's total independence under its kings and princes proved to be relatively short-lived. Dynastic wrangling and power struggles among the nobility led to such chaos that Zvonimir's widow, Queen Ilona, appealed to Hungary to help in restoring order in the feuding state. The result was that, in 1102, Hungarian King Koloman was crowned with the

Front cover of missal showing Hrovje Vuksic.

Croatian crown, pledging to respect Croatia's laws and customs — and to rid the Adriatic coast of Venice (which he did).

For just over two hundred years Croatia had survived as a totally independent state, recognised by the great powers of the time. It was long enough for an identity to jell, and to form the beginnings of traditions and institutions that would endure. But with the decision by Croatia's nobles to embrace and crown Koloman as their king, that would change forever. Over the next four hundred years Croatia continued to develop as a distinct country with its own local governors, diet and administration — but would now be linked to Hungary in the person of a common king.

#### Defending themselves against the Mongol horde

In 1277 Ugudei, the son and successor of Genghis Khan, wholeheartedly inherited his father's campaign to conquer the rest of the world. Sending a huge army into Eastern Europe, the swift Mongol horde of lightly armed riders and archers swept through Hungary and down into Croatia, in pursuit of plunder, and the fleeing Hungarian-Croatian King Bela IV (1235-1270). After ravaging



eastern Croatia — plundering and destroying everything outside of its fortified cities — and Zagreb, the Mongols headed south towards the cities of Split and Trogir. Having been defeated once trying to defend Hungary, the armies of the Croatian nobility took up defences in the mountains and ravines south of the Sava river. Somewhere around Rijeka, overextended logistically and encountering fierce opposition, the Mongol horde was stopped and defeated in the spring of 1242.

The Mongol horde was an ominous foretaste of things to come for Croatia. Within a hundred years, in Asia Minor, an expansive military power would take shape that would test the mettle of the Croatian people and nation like they had never been tested before.

At the beginning of the 9th century the Avar-Slav state had collapsed under the powerful assaults of the Frankish empire. On the Avar-dominated territory a succession of Slavic states came into being in which, it appears, the leading role was played by the Slavized, formerly Avar warrior clans. The creation of the Croatian state and the identity of the ruling élite which created it is unclear even today. But we do know

that the Croatians founded two large principalities. One was on the southern (lower) part of the Pannonian plain, surrounding the Sava, Drava and right bank of the Danube rivers, called Pannonian Croatia. The other part was along the coast of the Adriatic sea, between the Zrmanja and Cetina rivers, called Dalmatian Croatia.

Thanks to the custom of placing artifacts in graves, a custom which lasted through the whole 9th and 10th centuries and beyond, the material culture of the population of the early middle age Croatian state is quite clear. It consisted of several Avar-Slav cultural levels, the most clearly delineated of which was the Frankish layer which belonged to the warrior élite, and the mixture of Byzantine influence which penetrated into the Dalmatian cities.

While Dalmatian Croatia represented an advocate of Frankish interests on its territory, accounting for the exceptional military power of this tiny principality, Pannonian Croatia was for a long time in sharp confrontation with the Frankish empire. Documents attest to bloody battles during the rule of the legendary Prince Ljudevit Posavski (810-823), and then also during Bulgarian domination under the rule of their vassal Ratimir (829-838).

**To be continued**



The coat of arms of Hrvoje Vuksic.





Three plates from the Flemish engraver Theodor de Bry's *Historia Americae*, a series of fourteen volumes describing some 35 'explorations' over a period of 150 years. Six volumes were published before de Bry's death in 1598; thereafter the series was continued until 1634 by his widow, sons and grandsons. The series was published in German and Latin, with additional English and French editions of Thomas Harriot's *Virginia* (1590) which formed the first part of the series.

The top two plates relate to punitive action taken by Captain Samuel Argall. In 1614, Captain Argall seized Pocohontas (plate 4), daughter of the local chief Powhatan, as a hostage to exchange for settles and European weapons taken by the Indian. Seven settlers were released but the weapons were not recovered until some months later when Captain Argall took Pocohontas, 150 men and several ships on a punitive raid against Powhatan's principal village. The text describing this action reads: 'being thus justly provoked we presently manned our boats, went on shore, burned all their houses and spoiled all we could find. Then they answered that our swords and weapons would be brought next day. .... After we had made peace two of Powhatan's sons came to see their sister. When they saw her well, despite what they had heard to the contrary, they much rejoiced promising they would persuade their father to redeem them and for ever be friends with us.'



At the bottom — After years of peace and 'Alarums which cam to nothing' the English came to place undue reliance on their treaties with the Indians. As a result they were unprepared for an organised uprising on 22 March 1622 which swept away several of the settlements with the massacre of 347 settlers. (By permission National Maritime Museum.)





# The Virginia Militia

KEITH ROBERTS Painting by RICHARD HOOK

DURING THE EARLY days the settlers in Virginia suffered heavy losses from Indian raids and ambushes, and eventually evolved an efficient Militia which, though poorly equipped by European standards, proved remarkably effective.

## EARLY DAYS

ENGLISH EXPLORATION of the New World began in 1487 when Henry VII despatched John Cabot to seek a north-west passage to the Indies. Although they were to use this later as the basis of a territorial claim, the English made greater efforts at first with piracy than colonisation in the Americas. However, by the 1580s English opinion supported more permanent involvement, a view expressed in 1582 by the Elizabethan geographer Richard Hakluyt as 'the time approacheth and now is that we of England may share and part stakes (if we will ourselves) both with the Spaniard and with the Portugal in part of America and other Regions as yet undiscovered'. Hakluyt also suggested that 'the Queen of England's title to all the West Indies, or at least as much as is from Florida to the arctic circle, is more lawful and right than the Spaniards, or any other Christian Princes', a claim which could not be supported without conflict.

The first Royal patent to settle there was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Walter Raleigh in 1584 and two of his Captains, Barlowe and Armadas, were sent to conduct an exploratory voyage along the eastern coast of North America, an area which they called 'Virginia' in honour of

their Virgin Queen. A colony was established off the coast at Roanoke island in 1585 but this first attempt failed and the colonists were evacuated by Sir Francis Drake when he called there some twelve months later on his return from a raiding expedition against the Spanish. A second attempt at settlement was made in 1587 but English attention was diverted in the following year by Spanish threats to invade England and when a further expedition reached Roanoke in 1590 the colony was deserted and the fate of the colonists unknown.

Several English Captains traded along the North American coast in subsequent years but it was not until 1606 that new patents were granted to two merchant groups called the Virginia Company of London and the Plymouth Company. The Virginia Company sent out an expedition consisting of 104 settlers in three ships in December 1606. They arrived off Chesapeake Bay in April 1607 and sailed some thirty miles up the river north-west of its entrance, which they named the James river in honour of King James I, to found their base, Jamestown.

## JAMESTOWN AND THE VIRGINIA COLONY

The colonists needed a good

harbour for this new base but they also had its defensive potential in mind. The Jamestown site was on a small peninsula joined to the mainland by a narrow strip of land. Their relations with the Indians started badly as the local Paspehegh tribe lost little time in launching a major attack. The colony's defences consisted of a perimeter of brushwood and logs and was only saved by the courage of its President, Edward Wingfield, in defending the gateway with his officers, and the Indians' fear of unfamiliar musket fire and louder artillery fire from the three ships anchored off the shore.

Both colonists and Indians learned from this first encounter and both sought solutions to their conflict according to their respective military traditions. The colonists built a triangular palisade with artillery sited in 'Halfe Moone' strongpoints on each corner to defend Jamestown from direct attack. The Indians made no fullscale attacks on the palisades but continually harassed the colonists by ambushing individuals or small groups and retreating when stronger forces were sent out in support.

Faced with the continuous threat of ambush and unable to hunt or farm effectively as a result, the colonists' position was worsened by internal dissent. Morale collapsed and if the Indian leader, Powhatan, had not called a halt to this guerrilla warfare, possibly with a view to using the English as allies in his wars against other tribes, the colony would have collapsed. Puzzled by a change of attitude whereby the Indians traded or gave corn 'to refresh us, when we rather expected

they would destroy us', the colonists saw their reprieve as Divine Providence.

Fortunately for them Captain John Smith, the new leader who took command of the colony in September 1608, saw military and not Divine solutions for the survival of the Jamestown settlement. Smith was a professional soldier who had served as a mercenary in several European armies, this being a socially acceptable trade at the time. Appalled by the colonists' 'small experience in martiall accidents'<sup>1</sup> with many 'not knowing what to doe nor how to use a Piece' (firearm); Smith rebuilt the fortifications as a pentagon<sup>2</sup>, added blockhouses as outworks to defend the passage joining the Jamestown peninsula to the mainland and organised regular guard detachments. He also commenced a vigorous military training programme, beginning by teaching them to handle their weapons and once they presented more of a danger to their enemies than their friends by teaching tactics for fighting in wooded country. In the process he turned Jamestown from a palisaded town of civilian settlers into a fort with a garrison.

Smith saw the Colony's problem as a military one, and he used European military practice to resolve it. In the early 17th century this included skirmishing in broken or wooded country and small-scale raids against enemy strongpoints or the towns and villages which supplied them. Since his opponents would not fight in the open, his solution to Indian ambushes was to strike at their villages and cause such havoc that their chiefs would sue for peace. By the autumn of 1609, when the accidental explosion

## Centre pages:

English commanders in the Virginia colony were faced with the problem of dealing with Indian attacks which relied on 'Stragegemes, trecheries or surprisals' to ambush and massacre small groups of colonists or individuals. As it was impossible to protect scattered settlements against so elusive a foe, their response was to mount a series of counter raids on Indian villages with the intention of terrifying the chiefs into making peace. This was an effective strategy as the Indians relied on their crops for subsistence and if these together with their stores and huts were destroyed by raids many would die of cold and

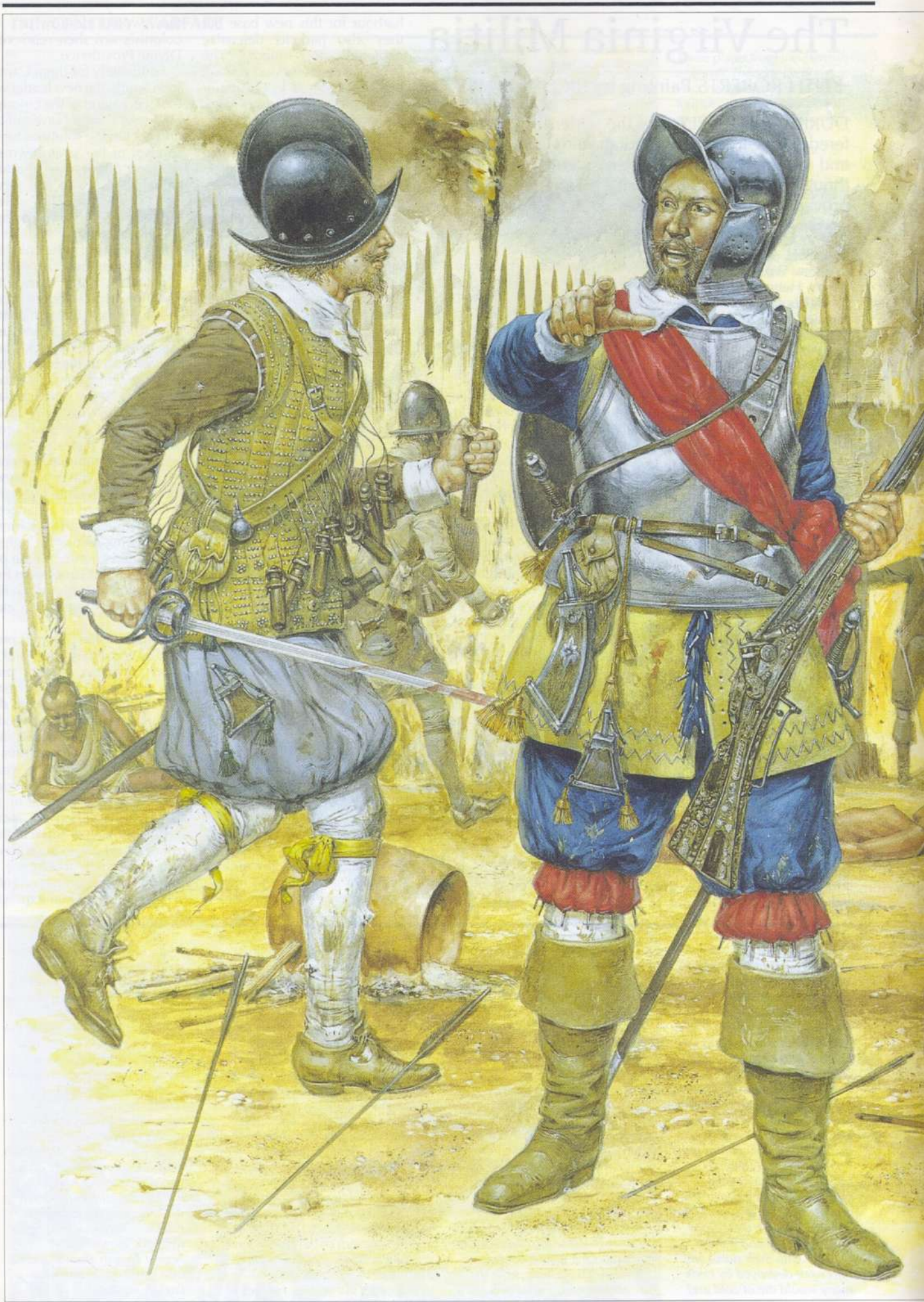
hunger during the winter. Indian weapons were 'onlie bowes made out of witch hazle, & arrowes of reeds; flat edged truncheons also of wood about a yard long, neither have they any thing to defend themselves but targets made of barks; and some armours made of stickes wickered together with thread'. Against these the English made effective use of modern European weapons, matchlock and snaphaunce muskets, for offence. They found the defensive equipment, such as brigandines or jacks, which was obsolete for European war because it would not stop musket balls, was perfectly adequate against arrows. As a

result the appearance of an English raiding party in the 1620s was a mixture of ancient defensive armour and modern firearms.

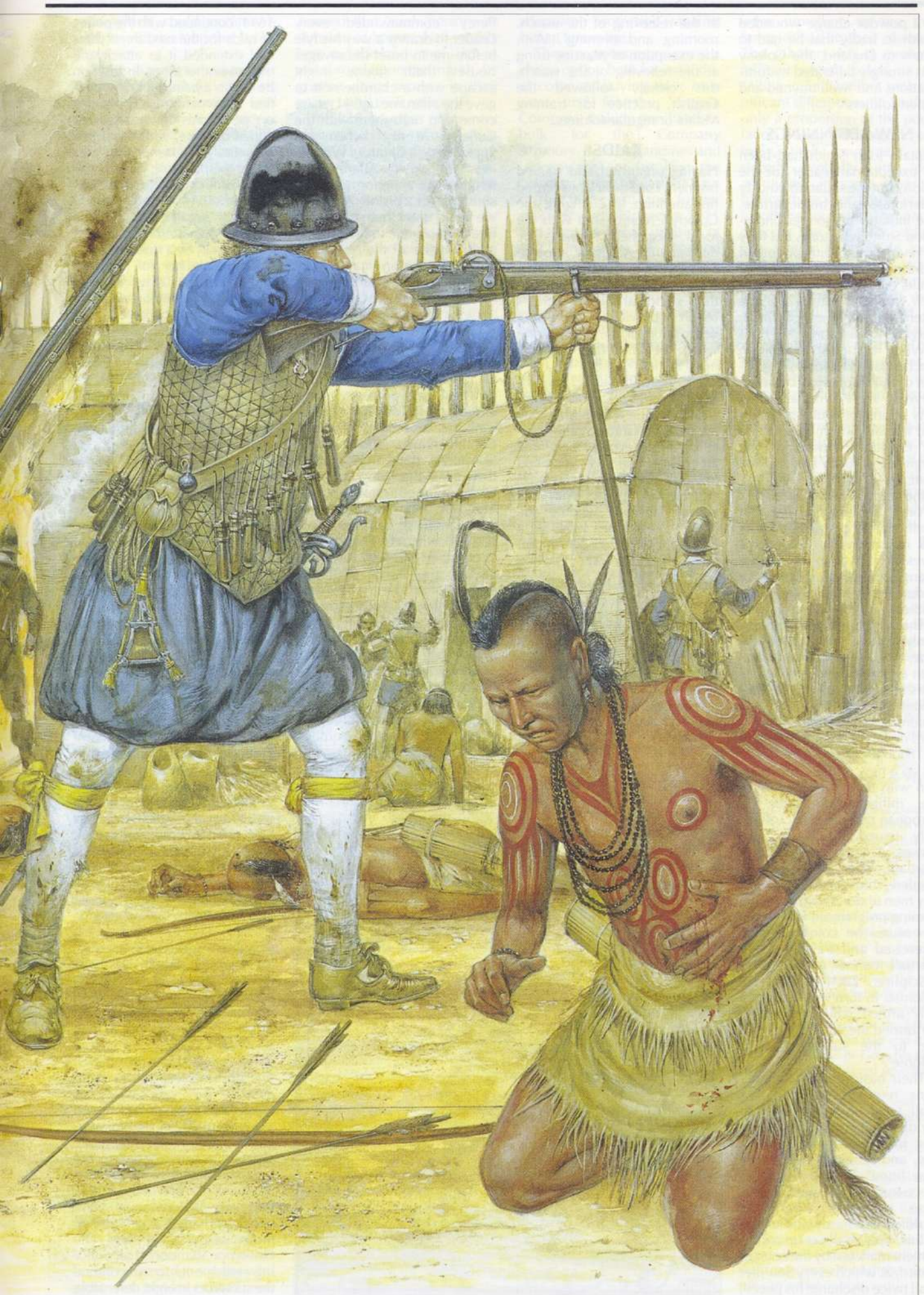
**Richard Hook's reconstructions shows:** An English Captain armed with a Burgonet helmet, and back and breast plates over a buff coat. He carries a snaphaunce musket with his powder flask and bullet bag slung from his waist belt. His target, useful for hand to hand fighting is slung over his back. An English Militia soldier armed with a 'Spanish' morion helmet and a jack for defence. The bulge at the stomach of the jack reflects an Elizabethan fashion which the design copied, now decades out of date. He fires a

heavy matchlock musket from its forked rest. Each container in the bandolier worn over his shoulder carries enough coarse powder for a single shot. The finer powder used to prime the musket is carried in the small triangular flask suspended from the bandoleer. An English Militia soldier armed with a morion helmet and a brigandine. He has left his musket with colleagues as he uses a torch to help burn down the village and will rely on his sword if attacked. And an Indian chieftain struck down while rallying his followers. His cause is hopeless as his weapons are ineffective against English armour and his men run away in fear of English muskets.











of a powder charge wounded Smith so badly that he had to return to England, the Colony was strongly defended by fortifications and 'well trayned and expert soldiers'.

## NEW BEGINNINGS

Captain John Smith had been an exceptional leader for the colony but the situation quickly deteriorated after his departure. The Indians 'no sooner understood Smith was gone, but they all revolted and did spoile and murther all they encountered', while the colonists neglected their military efforts to the extent that they were confined, starving, to their fort.

When a further expedition reached Jamestown in the summer of 1610 only sixty colonists survived there with a further forty at another outpost. Smith had left 500 when he returned to England. However, the Virginia Company had learned from the disastrous early days of the colony and accepted that its only chance to survive, and finally start to bring some financial return on the Company's investment, was to establish a strong military government under experienced and able soldiers.

The Virginia Company certainly chose the right men this time, 'excellent old souldiers' with experience in the vicious wars in Ireland and in the Low Countries. The new Commander, Sir Thomas West, Lord de la Warr and his deputy Sir Thomas Dale immediately set up a new military organisation with their own version of the military guidelines<sup>3</sup> a European commander customarily issued for his troops, 'Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall'. The colonists were divided into 'Companies' of fifty men under a Captain and a training programme was set up to ensure the colonists were 'exercised and trayned up in Martiall manner and warelike Discipline'. Each company of colonists in turn was on watch fully armed while the others performed the activities 'requisite to the subsisting of a colonie'.

Their basic training instructions required that 'Officers shall teach every Souldier to handle his peece, first to present in comely, and souldier like, and then to give fire, by false firing<sup>4</sup>, and so to fall his Piece to the right side with the nose up, and when the souldiers are hardy and expert in this, they shall set up a convenient mark fast by the court of Guard, at which every Souldier shall twice discharge his peece,

at the relieving of the watch, morning and evening'. With the exception of practice firing at the relieving of the watch, this closely followed the English practice for training Militia or regular soldiers.

## RAIDS

Having organised and trained his men, Lord de la Warr turned his attention to changing the Colony's relationship with the local Paspehegh Indians by despatching Captain George Percy with a picked detachment of seventy men to raid their principal village. Percy's report provides a useful description of the type of raid which became the Colony's main tactic.

Having approached the village in boats, Captain Percy landed his men and 'draweing my sowldiers into Battallion placing a Capteyne or Leftennte att every fyle we marched towards the Towne haveings An Indyan guyde with me named Kempes whome the Provost marshall<sup>5</sup> ledd in a hande locke'. Once on the outskirts of the village Captain

*Trained Band Musketeer from an English training Manual circa 1623. This soldier is equipped for European warfare, his counterpart in Virginia added defensive armour useless against European musket shot but effective against indian arrows. (British Library.)*

Percy 'commawnded every Leader to draww a way his fyle before me to beset the savages houses thattt noene might escape with a chardge nott to geve the allarume untill I weare come upp unto them with the Cullers<sup>6</sup>. At my comeinge I appoynted Capte William Weste to geve the Allarume the which he performed by shootinge of a pistoll. And then we fell in upon them putt some fiftene or sixtene to the Sworde and Almoste all the rest to flyghte. Whereupon I cawsed my drume to beate and drewe all my Sowldiers to the Cullers'.

Once the village had been taken and the Indians had fled, Captain Percy 'dispersed my fyles Apointeing my Sowldiers to burne their houses and cutt downe their Corne groweing around their Towne'. He then sent a subordinate officer, Captain Davis, who marched 'Aboutt fowrtene myles into the Cowntry cutt downe their Corne burned their howses, Temples and idols'. Having 'performed all the spoyle he [Davis] could retourned aboard to be agene and then we sayled downe the River to James Towne'. On the way back Captain Percy killed two of the children of a Paspehegh Chief that he had captured against orders by 'Throweings them overboard and shoteings their brains out in the water'.

Sir Thomas Dale, who took command of the Colony in

1611, continued with the policy of raids for the next three years and extended it to attack and overawe other tribes. In addition he set up a pattern of new fortified settlements, each situated on peninsulas in the river as added defence, which enabled colonists to extend the area under their control. The continuing conflict came to a sudden end in 1614 when Captain Samuel Argall captured the Chief Powhatton's daughter, Pocohontas, by a ruse intending to exchange her for colonists and European arms recently captured by the Indians. Captain Argall's diplomacy is described in the accompanying plates but it is probable that Powhatton made peace because he could see no alternative.

## SURPRISE

With the establishment of what appeared to be a 'firme peace', the military posture of the colonists relaxed and by 1617 they had begun to abandon their fortified settlements as they concentrated on growing a cash crop for export, tobacco. In 1619 the new Governor, Sir George Yeardley, formally dissolved the military structure of the Colony's government.

Given past experience, this was a surprisingly confident attitude, particularly as the colonists provided an obvious source of conflict as they continued to appropriate land for tobacco cultivation that the Indians needed to grow corn. Rumours of Indian unrest were circulating by 1621 when the new Governor, Sir Francis Wyatt, took up office but he observed that the colonists were not concerned and took at face value the assurance which Chief Openchankanough, Powhatton's successor, offered that 'the Skye should sonner fall then Peace be broken'.

On Friday, 22 March 1622, smouldering discontent erupted in a well planned uprising. Indians came to the English settlements as if to conduct ordinary trading then suddenly fell on the Colonists, killing all they could find regardless of 'age or sexe, man, woman or childe'. The uprising was not as complete a success as Openchankanough had hoped as his warriors delayed to mutilate the dead rather than move quickly from one target to the next and Jamestown itself was alerted on the eve of the attack. Even so, 347 colonists were killed, perhaps a quarter of all those in Virginia, and the Governor abandoned all outlying settlements to concentrate the survivors in eight defensible





sites which could communicate by water along the James River.

The Indians returned to their tactic of ambushing colonists outside the fortifications and were successful to the extent that the colonists were prevented from growing the corn they needed. As a result they were 'not onlie putt from planting Corne, tobacco, and other nesarye Employments whereby they might be able to subsist, but also have no corne for the present to maintaine life'. Hundreds died in the following months of famine and the disease which spread in overcrowded and effectively besieged forts.

### FINAL SOLUTION

The Virginia Company, dismayed not only by the loss of so many colonists but the reversal of their commercial hopes, issued final instructions to the Governor as the solution for the Colony's future. 'We must advise you to root out from being any longer a people, so cursed a nation, ungratefull to all benefittes, and incapable of all goodnesse: at least to the removeall of them so farr from you, as you may not only be out of danger, but out of feare of them, of whose faith and good meaning you can never be secure: wherefore as they have merited let them have a perpetuall warre without peace or truce.'

This is exactly what Sir Francis Wyatt and his successors did, sending out punitive parties whose maxim was 'with these barbarous and perfidious enemys, wee hold nothinge unjuste, that may tend to their ruine, (except breach of faith) Strategems were ever allowed against all enemies, but with these neither fayre Warr nor good quarter is ever to be held'. Future truces were simply for convenience and the Indians were regarded as 'irreconcilable enemyes', a policy which did not change when James I dissolved the Virginia Company in 1624 and brought the Colony under direct Royal control.

The policy of all-out war required a new military organisation for Virginia since the soldiers were colonists with families to support and farms which would suffer by their absence. The solution which was reached was based on the practice of the English Militia but with a local slant. In England, several householders might be grouped to provide a single soldier and his equipment. In Virginia, where all colonists had to be armed, a soldier who went on service could rest

assured that, 'such persons as remaine at home, shall ratably bere out the labours of such as are abroad upon the march, by givinge dayes workes in their groun untill their returre'.

In 1629, a further refinement was added as the Colony was divided into four districts, each under a local commander. Forces from different districts could operate in conjunction for combined operations or separately in response to local threats whenever their commanders 'in their discretion shall deeme it convenient to cleare the woods'. In 1631 the Colonists began their most ambitious fortification project by linking the James and York rivers by a six-mile line of fortifications with blockhouses set at intervals along it. The Governor reported that as a result he had 'secured a great part of the Countrey from the incursions of the natives', describing the enclosed area as 'neere as bigg as Kent'. With the security this offered for their farms and livestock the colonists may have been more willing to consider peace.

### ARMS AND ARMOUR

During the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's reign the English Militia had been reorganised from a mass levy to a selected force of 'Trained Bands'. These soldiers, for whom the word 'trained' was the desire and not always the reality, were to be equipped with the latest modern weapons, some armed with caliver and musket for missile weapons and others as pikemen armoured in steel helmets with gorgets, back and breast plates and tassets (see MI/14 and MI/15 for illustrations of Elizabethan Trained Band soldiers). This made earlier armour, such as brigandines or jacks, obsolete as it could no longer pass muster when inspected by a Muster Master. As a result it could not be sold to either Militiamen or used by the Government to equip regular soldiers.

Both a brigandine and a jack are illustrated in the accompanying colour plate. Each is formed by attaching metal plates to a canvas or leather base, a brigandine by riveting rectangular plates each overlapping the other and a Jack by stitching smaller plates one alongside the other. From the outside only the rivets of a brigandine or the cross stitching of a jack are visible. These armours were obsolete for modern warfare because they were not resistant to modern firearms but provided perfectly

adequate protection against indian arrow fire.

These armours represented a cheap option both for individual colonists buying their own arms and for the Virginia Company making purchases in bulk for the Company Armoury. Both brigandines and jacks were in use by the colonists from the earliest days of the settlement and further supplies were shipped in 1611 and after the Indian uprising of 1622. In each case supplied from Crown stores on the basis that 'though they were altogether unfit for moderne service, they might nevertheless be serviceable against that naked people' (Indians). Apart from documentary evidence describing equipment shipped to Virginia and in Muster Records of the Militia, plates from a brigandine and others from a jack were unearthed during I. N. Hume's excavations of the settlement at 'Martin's Hundred'. In addition to their body armour the colonists required a 'heed-piece' and would have used a variety of helmets; old fashioned styles would also have been cheap.

For offense, the colonists' most effective weapon was the musket. This was usually the heavy matchlock illustrated in the colour plate, but they also made use of swords, pistols and shields for close fighting. The Colony's instructions for 1611 describe the equipment required for officers 'And likewise every officer armed as before, with a firelocke, or a Snaphaunse, heedpiece, and a Target, onely the Sergeant in Garrison shall use his Halbert, and in field his Snaphaunse and Target'.

### CONCLUSIONS

From the earliest days of their settlement the colonists in Virginia were obliged to develop effective means of defence against Indian attack. To do so they relied upon European experience to provide a model, their fortifications were built on European patterns and their raids on Indian villages were organised on similar lines to those conducted in Ireland or along the frontiers of the Low Countries.

However, the Colony's defence relied upon farmers not professional soldiers and the requirements of its main cash crop, tobacco, led them to disperse away from central settlements. The Colony could only be defended by men who stayed away from their farms to fight Indians but the colonists

were unwilling to see their farms ruined in their absence. The solution was to evolve a military system based on the Militia in England but with significant differences. In England only a proportion of the population was armed and, increasingly, their equipment was stored centrally in local armouries, in some cases by having them specially built and in others by using the parish church. The threat to England was foreign invasion in force and the Trained Bands would be mustered to oppose enemies in open field. In Virginia most able-bodied men would be armed but the threat they faced was individual attack. Their only effective defence was to keep arms at home, not in a Company store, and despite Company regulations to their contrary arms were distributed amongst colonists who lacked them. One consequence of this was a different attitude to an armed population in England and America, a tradition which continues to the present day.

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### Notes

1 For 'Martial accidents' read 'Accidence', a term found in Gervase Markham's *The Souldiers Accidence* (London 1625), a book of military theory describing the arming equipping and training of Trained Band soldiers.

2 The Pentagon was one of the simplest forms of fortification used at the time and according to Robert Ward's *Animadversions of Warre* (London, 1639) the best 'in regard it hath more capacity in it, then the foure-square, or Triangle or Halfe-Moones'.

3 European Commanders customarily issued a set of 'Articles of War' setting out the rules and regulations for their Army and the punishment for transgression. Garrison commanders sometimes produced shorter local versions.

4 After teaching a soldier the procedure for firing a musket, he was instructed to practice by priming with powder in the priming pan but not putting a charge down the barrel. This was called 'false-fire' as the musket was not loaded. It served to accustom the would-be musketeer to the flash from the pan and train him not to 'wink' or close his eyes as he fired. It also saved powder in training.

5 The Provost Marshall was the officer entrusted with the enforcement of military discipline. He would arrest wrongdoers and, after Court Marshal, carry out the punishment. He would be logical man to take charge of any prisoner.

6 Cullers are Colours, a flag or ensign carried as a rallying point.

7 A Target is a round shield used by infantrymen. Few soldiers still used them in Europe although they were still carried for display.



# Battlefields from the Air

MIKE and JENNY McCORMAC

FOLLOWING THE popularity of their earlier 'Dawn To Dusk' articles, the McCormacs have started photographing other battlefields and sites of military interest exclusively for 'MI' whenever they chance to fly over one.

## LANGPORT, 10 JULY 1645

IN JUNE 1645 the Royalist Lord Goring was besieging Taunton. In response, Parliament sent Lord Fairfax to relieve the town. By 1 July, Lord Fairfax had reached Salisbury, by the next day he had reached Blandford, and by the third of the month he had reached Dorchester. When Lord Goring heard about the advancing Parliamentary army, he gave up the siege of Taunton and retreated to hold the bridges over the River Yeo at Ilchester and Langport. From either of these he could retreat further to the Royalist stronghold at Bridgwater if he needed to.

Fairfax divided his advancing forces equally between Ilchester and Yeovil. On hearing of this, Goring abandoned his efforts to hold the bridge at Ilchester and sent his baggage and guns ahead to Bridgwater. As an attempt at deception, Goring sent a body of horse towards Taunton to try to convince Fairfax that the town was again under threat, but this attempt was stopped and Goring was forced to return to the safety of Langport. Fairfax crossed the River Yeo at Ilchester, engaging Goring at

Langport on 10 July.

Goring's position was fronted by a brook known as Wagg Rhyne, and by a good deal of marshy ground. The Langport to Somerton road crossed the brook at a ford, which the Royalists defended from higher ground to the west. The road and the surrounding fields were bordered by hedges which Goring lined with his musketeers. He positioned two guns supported by cavalry to cover the ford itself. It was an apparently strong position, the nature of the ground giving Fairfax little alternative but a frontal attack along the road.

The first action of the Parliamentarians was to silence the Royalists' guns. After achieving this, they sent 1,500 musketeers forward to clear the hedges surrounding the ford. As the Royalist infantry fell back, Cromwell's horse charged across the ford and up the slope on its west side. The first two ranks of Royalist horse broke before this charge, but Goring's remaining cavalry massed against them and began to push them back. At this critical moment troops from Fairfax's regiment struck Goring's cavalry in the flank, then the Parliamentary foot began to arrive in force. Goring's army



broke and fled, and although only 300 Royalists were killed, many more were captured or deserted. After garrisoning Bridgwater, Goring retreated further into Devon with the remnants of his army.

## THE CITADELLE AT DOULLENS

DOULLENS is a small town in the Somme Département of northern France. The town has a commanding position at the junction of the valleys of the Rivers Authie and Grouche. It is dominated by an unusually large old citadelle which stands on higher ground to the south-west of the town. Dating from the Middle Ages, the citadelle was modified first by Jean Errard de Bar-le-Duc and later by the famous Vauban.

Sébastien le Prestre de Vauban's name is synonymous with French fortifications dating from the 17th century. He is reputed to have either built or re-modelled over 160 towns and cities throughout France, his influence being so strong that almost any French bastioned work is often wrongly referred to as being 'Vauban-style'. The stone-built parts of the citadelle at Doullens date from the 16th century, whilst the brick-built parts date from the 17th century. The town and its citadelle played a part in the Flanders campaign against Spain in 1667. Since then the citadelle has had a variety of uses. In the late 19th century it was used as a women's prison, later becoming a girl's school during the 1920s.

MI

*The photograph of the battlefield is taken from the south-east, with the edge of Langport on the left-hand edge of the picture. The Langport to Somerton road crosses the picture from left to right, just below the centre of the picture. The Wagg Rhyne brook crosses the Langport to Somerton road just to the left of the prominent fork in the road, just below the centre-right of the picture. The Royalist positions were to the left of the brook, the Parliamentarians to the right. The fields were probably smaller in 1645, their hedges providing more cover than today's open countryside.*





# King James' Foot: Royal Infantry, Sedgemoor, 1685

## WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

The foot soldiers of this period can be divided into three types: pikemen, musketeers and grenadiers.

### Pikemen

The pike would survive for only another 20 years as a major weapon of the army, but in 1685 it retained its principal role of defending an infantry body from cavalry. The continued effectiveness of the pike was seen at Sedgemoor when, having exhausted their ammunition, the rebels were able to beat off the Royal cavalry with pikes and scythes attached to eight foot poles. In the Royal Army approximately one third of a foot company was armed with a 16-foot long pike and a sword worn on a shoulder belt. This was in line with the most up-to-date practice for the 'Scotch' regiments which returned from Dutch service were reported to be each 600 strong, a third of them pikemen<sup>24</sup>. After the Restoration there is evidence that pikemen wore buff coats and may have worn body armour and helmets<sup>25</sup>. By 1685 the armour was no longer used and black felt hats are reported.

### Musketeers

The 'Regulation for musters, Whitehall, 21 Febr., 1686/7' stated in part: 'The Musqueteers of our regiment of Foot-Guards to have Snaphance Musquets, with bright barrels, of three foot eight inches long in the barrel, with goods swords, bandoliers, and bayonets; and the Pikemen (as also the Pikemen of all other regiments) to have pikes sixteen feet long, with good swords. Musquetiers of all other regiments of Foot (excepting our Regiment of Fusiliers, the Granadiers, and the Company of Miners) to have Matchlock and Snaphance Musquets; the barrels whereof to be three foot six inches long, good swords, and bandoliers...'<sup>26</sup>

With the Guards battalions armed with snaphances, the flintlock outnumbered the matchlock in the Royal Army at Sedgemoor. New companies of The Holland regiment received nine snaphances to 26 matchlocks per company on 20 October 1684<sup>27</sup>. On 13 September 1684 when five companies drawn from Trelawney's Regiment were re-armed before being sent to

## JOHN TINCEY

THE ARMY OF James II was a transitional one, still retaining many characteristics of the Civil War period but clearly showing — through the discarding of armour and the introduction of the bayonet, for example — the way the infantry would evolve in the 18th century.



Ireland they were re-equipped, each company receiving two halberds for the sergeants, one drum, three flintlocks and three bandoliers for the corporals, and 20 long pikes, 12 flintlocks, 28 matchlocks and 40 bandoliers for the men<sup>28</sup>. When existing companies were increased in size and new regiments raised to face the rebellion the new men were armed to a ratio of 6 snaphances to 28 matchlocks<sup>29</sup> and it seems likely that the three line battalions of the Sedgemoor army were equipped on this scale.

All musketeers carried their bullets and gunpowder in bandoliers which consisted of a leather shoulder belt support-

*A French pikeman from Giffart. Unlike the English, the French retained the use of back and breast plates for their pikemen until the pike was withdrawn from service around 1700.*

ing 12 wooden 'boxes', each containing a single charge of powder and a pouch holding the musket balls.

At this time the plug bayonet, which fitted into the muzzle of the musket, was considered as suitable only for specialist troops, like grenadiers and dragoons, whose tactical role did not allow them to be protected by pikemen. It was not until 1686 that Guard regiments were given bayonets for their

musketeers<sup>30</sup> and many line battalions had to wait until the turn of the century.

### Grenadiers

Grenadiers had been introduced into the army in 1678 and carried a pouch of grenades suspended by a belt over their left shoulder. This prevented them from wearing a bandolier and instead they carried their ball and powder in paper cartridges in a cartridge box worn on a waist belt. A Royal warrant of 28 April 1684 gives details of the grenadiers' equipment:

'Having thought fit to establish two Companies of Granadeers on foot to be established to Our two Regts. of Guards, consisting of one Captain, two Lieutenants, three Serjeants, three Corporals and fifty Private soldiers in each of them: Our will and pleasure is that out of Our stores remaining in the office of Our Ordnance you cause to be delivered to such officer or officers as the respective Colonels or chief officers of the said regts. shall appoint to receive the same, two drums, fifty-three light fuseses with slings, fifty three cartouch-boxes with girdles, three halberds, two partisans, fifty-three granado-pouches, fifty-three bayonets, fifty-three hatchets with girdles, for each of the two compies., as soon as they shall have delivered their present arms into the office of Ordnance. And for so doing this &c., &c.,

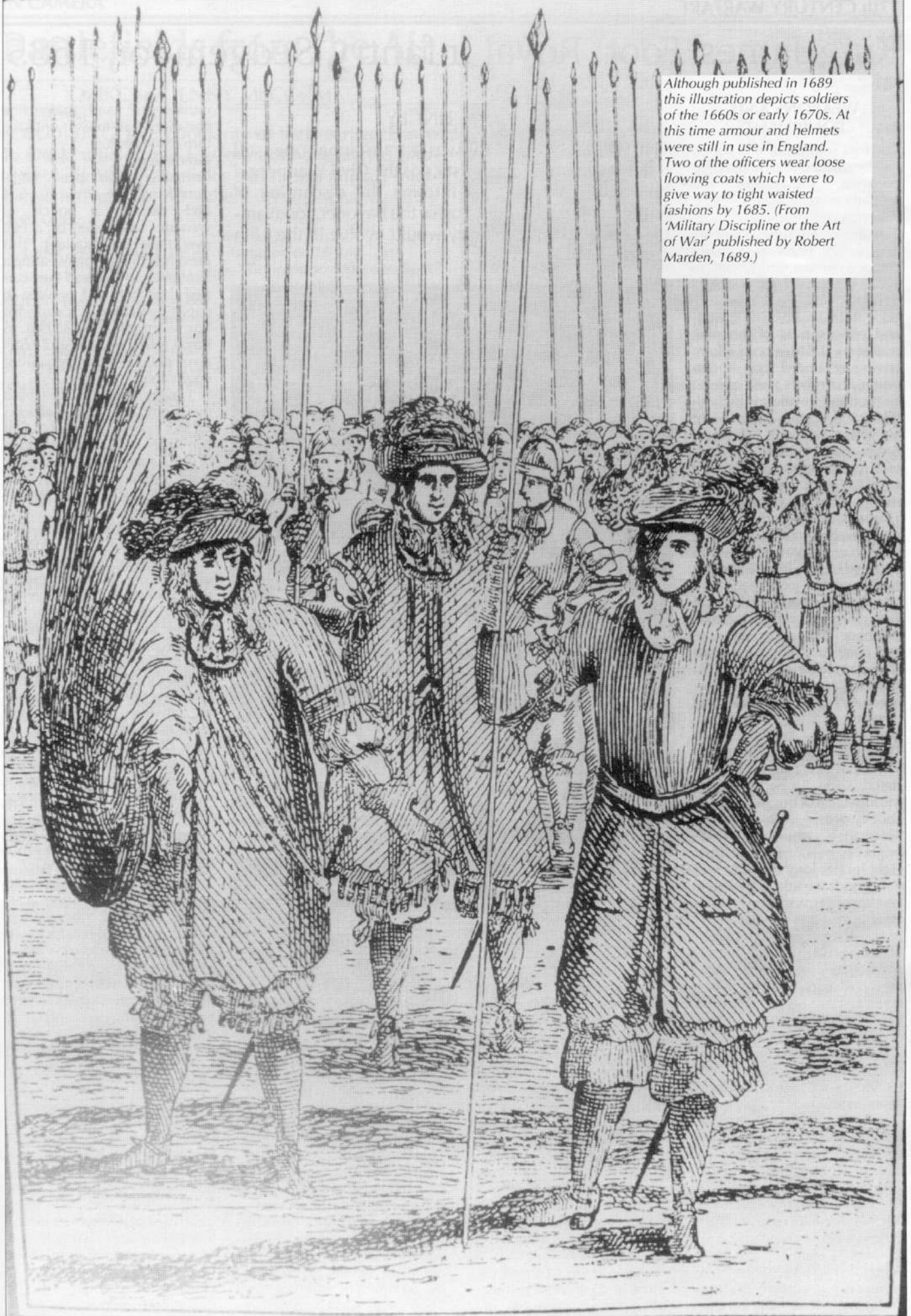
'Given &c., Windsor 28 April 1684. By His Majesty's Command SUNDERLAND.'<sup>31</sup>

The flintlocks issued to grenadiers were 'Long carbines, strapped; the barrels whereof to be three foot two inches long'. Stocks were made of walnut and fitted with French locks with double springs and the King's arms engraved on the side. The slings on which the muskets were worn 'strapped' across the back were specified as made of 'dromedary's leather'<sup>32</sup>.

The cartouch box was described in 1662 as 'Tyn Cartouch boxes covered with Leather of Calves Skins... with Formers, pryemeing boxes and neate leather girdles with white buckles.'<sup>33</sup> The box was worn on a waist belt ('neate' referring to leather made from cattle) and was made in the form of a pouch covered by a flap or 'apron'. It contained single charges of gunpowder in paper cartridges each held in a hole

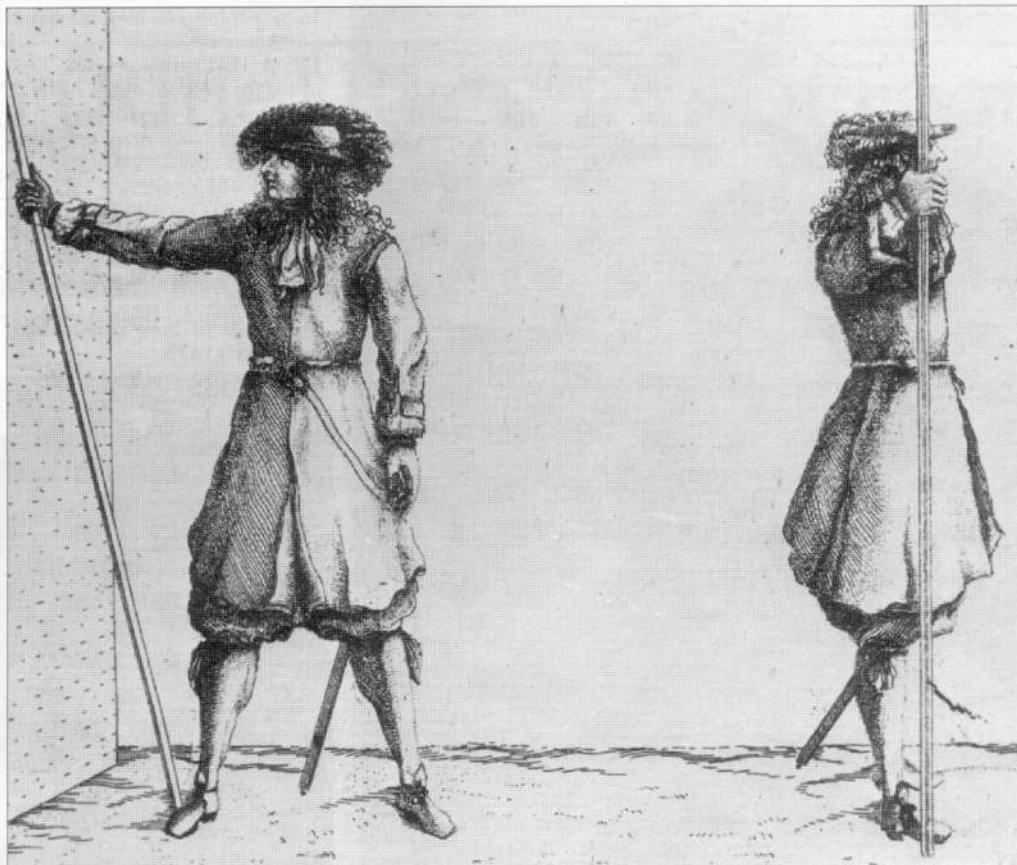


Although published in 1689 this illustration depicts soldiers of the 1660s or early 1670s. At this time armour and helmets were still in use in England. Two of the officers wear loose flowing coats which were to give way to tight waisted fashions by 1685. (From 'Military Discipline or the Art of War' published by Robert Marden, 1689.)





An Italian drill manual of the 1670s shows a soldier dressed and equipped in the manner that was to become the standard for all Western European armies. He has abandoned all armour including his helmet and wears his sword on a waist belt.



drilled in a block of wood, or former. That a primer of finer powder to fill the pan of the flintlock was also carried in the cartridge box is confirmed by the order in the contemporary drill for grenadiers. The grenade pouch contained three or four bombs and was worn on the right hip, supported on a strap over the left shoulder. The bayonet was worn on the left side on a belt fitted with frogs and it is likely, although it is not specified, that the hammer hatchet was supported from the same belt. Grenadiers did not wear swords at this time.

The Royal army which Charles II bequeathed to his brother is often portrayed as a toy formation created in imitation of the Sun King and intended to overawe a militant Parliament. Sedgemoor

showed that the army had learnt its trade from the great Marshals of the French Army and the hard campaigns of

Tangier. The future would be marred by desertions when King James next called upon his army in 1688, but the founda-

tions of the British Army had been firmly laid.

**MI**

#### Notes

1 PRO Entry Book 164 and CSPD James II Feb-Dec 1685.

2 This section is based on 'An Abrégement...', 1685 edn.

3 PRO War Office records of 28 June 1683 quoted in Walton p788. Being an order for exchanging the arms of the 24 Companies of the First Foot Guards, each Company to receive '43 Snaphance Musquets, 20 Pikes, 3 Large Pole-axes for Corporals, 2 halberds, 2 drums'.

4 PRO War Office records of 26 January 1684 quoted in Walton p797.

5 PRO WO 5/1.

6 PRO WO 47/15.

7 Historical Manuscripts Commission, Hastings II p179. Also PRO War Office records WO 5, 1 ff 167.

8 PRO War Office records quoted in Walton p796.

9 PRO WO 47/15.

10 PRO WO 47/14.

11 PRO WO 47/15.

12 BL Additional MSS 15897 f74. Computation of the Charge of his Matis Old Forces and of Sr. John Laniers Regt. of Horse with the addition of One Troop to the Royall Regiment of Horse (and six Troops to the Royall Regiment of Dragoons) according to the Former Establishment. 20 July 1685.

13 PRO WO 5/1 f105.

14 SP. Dom. James II 2 p43.

15 'Wade's narrative' BL Harleian Mss 6845. Reproduced in *The Monmouth Rebellion* by W. MacDonald Wigfield, Bradford on Avon, 1980.



This illustration from Mallet demonstrates the changes made to French musketeer equipment between 1670 (figure A) and 1683 (the B figures) which were also adopted by the English army. 'A' wears an bandolier of charges and a sword supported on a baldric. The 'B' figures have cartridge pouches on their belts with separate flasks for fine priming powder. Swords are now worn on waist belts.





This musketeer from Giffart demonstrates the firing stance in use at the end of the 17th century. This position, leaning forward over the left foot, was based upon drill set down when muskets were much heavier and required a musket rest. The butt of the musket was held against the central breast bone rather than pulled back into the shoulder as later became the norm.

**The Franco-German War of 1870-71** by Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke. Greenhill; ISBN 1-85367-131-2; 447pp; appendices; £21.95.

Although written nearly 20 years after the conclusion of the campaign which consolidated the new German Empire, von Moltke's account of what is today usually known as the Franco-Prussian War remains one of the finest primary sources on the subject.

Helmuth von Moltke, the creator of the Prussian General Staff and the man who probably did most to ensure victory first over the Austrians in 1866 and then the French five years later, was promoted to Field Marshal. Yet he was not a man who set out to place himself in the limelight, and largely relegated himself to the background in this account — itself a summary of the eight-volume history of the war prepared by the General Staff Historical Section.

A result of von Moltke's reticence is that the account which emerges is rather dry and colourless to read, and would have benefited greatly from the inclusion of maps, for following the detailed course of battles is very confusing without a visual guide. And the amount of detail is enormous, providing a unique reference source for everyone interested in what was the campaign which effectively set the stage for the two great global conflicts of the 20th century. Every single battle, from minor skirmishes to major encounters and sieges, is covered in practically an hour-by-hour fashion. Greenhill

Books are to be complimented on reissuing this classic study, our only criticism being that they should have asked Michael Howard — who has written a new Introduction — to prepare an index as well.

**The Battle Book** by Bryan Perrett. Arms & Armour: ISBN 1-85409-125-5; 349pp; appendices, index & bibliography; £16.99.

Sub-titled 'Crucial Conflicts in History from 1469 BC to the Present', Bryan Perrett's latest book provides a very useful quick reference guide to nearly 600 battles which in one way or another affected the course of history militarily or politically. The entries are in alphabetical rather than chronological order but an appendix lists the battles by wars in date order so cross-referencing is made easy.

Each entry gives basic data under the headings: date, location, war and campaign, opposing sides, objectives, forces engaged, casualties and results, with short notes following on particular points of interest. Possession of this book will give an excellent quick reference for that elusive detail you can't remember, and will be a boon to anyone setting a military quiz!

**Roman Military Equipment from the Punic Wars to the fall of Rome** by M.C. Bishop & J.C.N. Coulston. B.T. Batsford; 256pp,

16 SP Ireland 340 p94, quoted in CSPD James II, 1685.

17 (BL Harleian Mss 6845 'King James II's Account of the Battle of Sedgemoor'. Reproduced in *Sedgemoor 1685, An Account and Anthology* by David Chandler, London, 1985.)

18 PRO WO 26/4. War Office records quoted in Walton p786.

19 PRO WO 47/15.

20 CSPD James II 4 7 1685 and Entry Book 56 p252.

21 Letters of Lord Chesterfield, published 1829.

22 London Gazette 9 June 1690.

23 PRO War Office records. Quoted in *History of the British Standing Army A.D. 1660 to 1700* by Colonel Clifford Walton, London, 1894, p786.

24 PRO WO 47/15.

25 PRO Issue Book 13 & 14 Car, ii f22. Quoted in *The British Army: its Origin Progress, and Equipment* by Sir Sibbald Scott, Vol III, London 1880.

26 PRO War Office records quoted in Walton p799.

27 PRO WO 47/14.

28 State Papers Domestic Entry Book 164 p123. 'Order from the Master general of Ordnance for the following stores to be issued to Collier's, Jeffrey's, Purcell's, Radney's and Cullyford's companies late of Trelawney's Regiment of foot now on their way to Ireland and to receive the arms they now

have for repair. 2 halberts for sergeants, 3 snaphance muskets and 3 collars of bandoliers for corporals, One drume, 20 long pikes, 12 snaphance muskets, 28 matchlocks, 40 collars of bandoliers.'

29 PRO WO 47/15.

30 PRO War Office records of 22 February 1686 quoted in Walton p798. 'James R. Right trusty and well-beloved Counsellor we greet you well. It being necessary that all the musqueteers in Our two regts. of Guards should, for their more complete arming, be furnished with bayonets: Our will and pleasure is, that you cause to be delivered to the respective officers of Our said regts. the number of such bayonets as Our said stores (of the Ordnance) afford, proportionable to the said musqueteers in each of them. And for so doing this shall be your Warrant. Given, &c., Whitehall 22 Feby., 1685/6. By His Majesty's Command, SUNDERLAND. To Our trusty and well-beloved Cousin, Lord Dartmouth.'

31 PRO War Office records quoted in Walton p796.

32 PRO WO 47/15.

33 Quoted in *British Military Firearms 1650-1850* by Howard. L. Blackmore, London, 1691, p30.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

**142 line/tone ills, 8pp colour plates; appendix, notes, biblio; £35.00.**

This interesting, attractively produced and most useful book brings between two covers a mass of information on Roman arms, armour and other equipment drawn from representational, archaeological and documentary evidence. Most of the individual sources and finds will be known to specialist readers already; the great value of the book, in our opinion, lies in the assembly of these diverse pieces of evidence between two covers, clearly organised, and very neatly illustrated by Dr Bishop's clean and accessible line and tone drawings. (Although numbered from 1 to 142, it should be pointed out that many 'individual' drawings are in fact full page comparisons of numerous separate objects.) Arranged in a basically chronological sequence, this digest of information, much of which is otherwise available only from widely scattered and often academic sources, will save the non-academic student and enthusiast much time and expense. As the authors are to be congratulated on the content, so Batsford are to be congratulated on the presentation. Highly recommended.

**Wellington in the Peninsula 1808-1814** by Jac Weller. Greenhill Books, London, & Presidio Press, California; ISBN

1-85367-127-4; 392pp; 58 mono plates & 21 maps; bibliography & index; £19.50/\$37.50.

Jac Weller's book on the Peninsula, first published in 1961 and long out of print, has now been re-issued in Greenhill Books' Napoleonic Library with a new introduction and, more importantly, a new and far more detailed index than appeared in the original edition.

While acknowledging the debt all students of the Napoleonic period owe to Napier, Oman and Fortescue, Jac Weller's book has long been the best single-volume account of Sir Arthur Wellesley's Peninsula campaigns. The author visited each of the battle sites during his research and his topographical observations and maps, complemented by photographs taken in the late 1950s while the landscape was still comparatively primitive, assist enormously in giving the reader a sense of 'being there'.

The text is well written with good orders of battle and other useful statistics. It is not a complete history of the Peninsula campaigns, only touching briefly on events preceding Wellesley's appointment to command a new expeditionary force on 14 June 1808, and similarly only giving passing mention to battles involving solely Spanish or Portuguese troops. Instead, Weller concentrates on Wellesley's style of military leadership, bringing out those qualities which made him such an outstanding captain. Overall, it is a book which few Napoleonic enthusiasts will be able to resist buying.



# The 95th (Rifle) Regiment of Foot

NEIL LEONARD

HERE WE EXAMINE the origins of the British rifleman, his uniform, accoutrements, weapons, training and the factors which made him exceptional on the battlefield.

*Good example of the frontal view of the rifleman, showing the uniform and accoutrements to perfection.*



THE 95th REGIMENT as such had a fairly short lifespan, before a title change re-named them the Rifle Brigade in 1815. However, during its brief lifetime, it quickly became an élite corps of the British army; with a bold and daring reputation, which was the envy of many a line regiment. It was their proud boast that they were always the first onto the field of battle and always the last to leave.

The Experimental Corps of Riflemen had been formed on the express orders of HRH Frederick the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army during this period. A number of line regiments were ordered to furnish both officers and men, to be sent to Horsham for training with the new rifles. At Horsham they came under the command of two very capable officers, both experienced in the command and training of light troops, both also having had considerable combat experience. These men were Colonel Coote

*A rifleman demonstrates the kneeling position, with the elbow resting on the left knee supporting the stock of his Baker rifle. Note the way the rifle sling is used to support the arm whilst firing.*

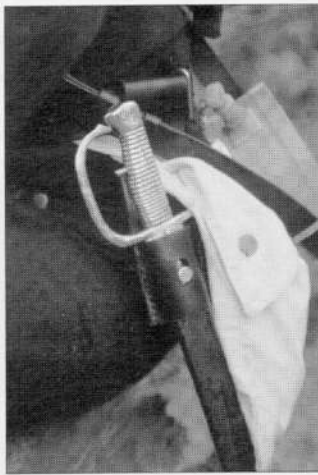
Manningham of the 41st Regiment and Colonel William Stuart of the 67th. Colonel Manningham had commanded light troops in the West Indian campaign of Sir Charles Grey. Colonel Stuart had been fighting with the Austrian forces in the 1799 campaign and had noted the importance of the light infantry arm. In the British Army it was almost completely lacking and his letters to the Secretary of War first suggested the setting up of a rifle-armed force in the British Army.

In the year 1802 the 95th, as it had been designated, along with the 43rd and 52nd regiments, both of which were also receiving training as light infantry, were sent to Shorncliffe camp in Kent, where they were to receive yet

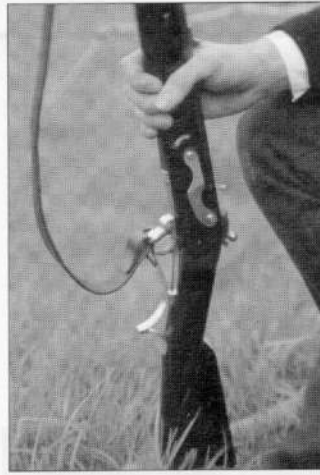




*Close-up view of the rifleman's powder horn, held in place with green cords. This would deliver a measured amount of powder for the firer each time.*



*A view of the flat-bladed sword bayonet. It measured a total of 24 inches, as compared to the Brown Bess's triangular socket bayonet's 17.*



*A view of the brass trigger guard and grip of the rifle, with the sling swivel for the black leather sling.*



*A close-up view of the black leather belt and ball pouch, a feature unique to the Rifles, and rifle-armed troops.*

more training under the command of Sir John Moore.

The new rifle battalion was clad in green, reflecting their greater emphasis upon camouflage and concealment rather than the bright red and gleaming uniforms of the line regiments. Rifleman were taught to be self-reliant and independent, they were expected to think and act for themselves rather than depend upon the decisions and order of their officers. Rifleman had to be able to read the ground, move from cover to cover, think for themselves, not expose themselves unnecessarily to the fire of the French voltigeurs and tirailleurs. All this was very important at a time when the rifle took almost twice as long to load as the smooth-bore musket. However, the accuracy and range of the rifle more than made up for this inconvenience.

#### **Uniforms**

The newly raised rifles were issued with the black felted stovepipe shako, festooned with green cords and worsted green plume, with a white metal bugle badge. Instead of the cumbersome and extremely uncomfortable and tight thick black leather dog stock, designed to keep the soldier's head and eyes erect and straight to the front (which was worn by all other British troops at the time), the rifles were issued a more comfortable and practical black silk or linen cravat in its place. Their tunics were made in a very dark shade of green wool which is now known as rifle green, with the black facings at the collar and cuffs piped in white cotton cord, with white metal buttons arranged in three rows on the tunic's breast.

Breeches were in either green or, in the case of overalls, some-

times in brown for the other ranks. The accoutrements of the rifleman consisted of the standard trotter knapsack, the standard linen haversack, Italian canteen, cartridge pouch suspended on a black leather belt, a powder horn for carrying the special fine grained powder used for priming the rifle, suspended on a green cord, and finally a waistbelt common to all rifle-armed troops in the British Army, with its small pouch for balls and frog for the flat-bladed sword bayonet.

The uniform and dress of the officers was entirely based on that of the light cavalry of the period. Initially they wore the very elegant light cavalry head-dress, the Tarleton helmet. It consisted of a black leather skull with peak, a large fur crest in black, usually stuffed with straw to form the crest, a green turban and green cut feather plume, with regimental bugle horn badge in silver. Later this form of head-dress was to be replaced by the black felted shako, with square folding peak, usually worn up, green cords and a small green cut feather plume.

The rifles officer wore the cavalry-style dolman and pelisse tunics, the later trimmed in brown fur, with elaborate black mohair square section braid frogged on the breasts of both tunics. Buttons would have been half ball type on the outer rows and full ball buttons on the central row.

At first the officer would have worn the hussar-influenced barrel sash, but later the light infantry sash in crimson was to replace it.

The equipment of the rifleman obviously differed from that of the line infantryman in many ways. The rifle eventually chosen for service with the new

corps was that made by Ezekiel Baker of Whitechapel in London and was selected after exhaustive tests at the Woolwich Arsenal in 1800.

It had a far smaller barrel length than the Tower musket or Brown Bess, measuring 30 inches in length as compared to the average 40 inches of the various pattern of Brown Bess. The rifle had a calibre of .615, whereas the musket had a calibre of .75. Instead of the normal 17-inch triangular socket bayonet of the musket-armed infantry, the rifleman was issued with the 24-inch-long flat-bladed sword bayonet, with stirrup guarded brass hilt and spring loaded clip for attachment to the muzzle of the rifle. Apparently the sword bayonet was universally disliked by the riflemen. It was not possible to fire the rifle with the sword bayonet attached, which was possibly one of the reasons for its dislike, and by all accounts it was only good for cutting wood for the watch fires.

The Rifles engendered an esprit de corps that was not known at the time in other corps. Instead of being flogged, and made to do their duty by the fear of the lash, they were taught. They were encouraged to regard themselves as craftsmen skilled in the art of war. Regularly the Rifles held sporting and shooting competitions, for which the men were rewarded for their achievements; this had the effect of improving their marksmanship and competence.

Recruits who were selected for the Rifles were the pick of the bunch, the cream of the land; only the best men of the militia regiments, from which the regular army were allowed to recruit, were selected for ser-

vice with the Rifles. Many of the men were able to read and write, which was not altogether common at the time.

A typical recruiting poster of the 95th at this period boasts: "The first of all services in the British Army, in this distinguished service you will carry a rifle no heavier than a fowling piece. You will knock down your enemy at five hundred yards, instead of missing him at fifty. Your clothing is green and needs no cleaning but a brush. Those men who have been in a rifle company can tell you of the comfort of a green jacket. NO WHITE BELTS! NO PIPE CLAY! On service your post is always the post of honour, and your quarters the best in the Army, for you have the first of everything; at home you are sure of respect because a British rifleman always makes himself respectable. The rifle sergeants are to be found anywhere, and have orders to treat their friends gallantly everywhere. If you enlist and afterwards wish you had been a rifleman, do not say you were not asked, for you can blame nobody but yourself. GOD SAVE THE KING AND HIS RIFLE REGIMENT."

The painstaking application of pipe clay, as alluded to in the text of the poster, involved the crushing and grinding of white clay into a fine powder; with the addition of water this was then formed into a paste, which was then carefully applied to the buff leather accoutrements of the line infantry regiments. (There were some exceptions; those regiments which had buff coloured accoutrements.) The paste was applied in thin layers and built up to form a very smooth surface on the straps, etc. The pipe clay had a tendency to chip and flake off and the



process would have to be carried out again. The accoutrements of the rifles were made in black leather, and as a result needed no pipeclaying. However, they would still have needed to be polished and cleaned, probably with 'black ball', a form of boot polish. Pipe clay and black ball were not items that the soldier could purchase, but had to be made up by the man himself. A typical recipe for black ball for boots consisted of the following: six ounces of beeswax, two ounces of virgins wax, one ounce of hard tallow, one barrel of lamp black, mixed and boiled in an earthen pot. Once taken of the fire an ounce of plumb gum was added, and the mixture stirred until cold and solid.

The loading and firing of a rifle differed little from that of a muzzle loaded musket, for which the firer would remove a prepared cartridge from his pouch; this consisted of a beeswaxed paper tube with a measured amount of gunpowder and lead ball bound together. The firer would bite off the end of the cartridge containing the ball, pour a little powder into the flash pan of the musket and the remaining charge into the barrel of the musket. The lead ball was then inserted, followed by the cartridge paper; removing his ramrod from the retaining pipes along the stock of the musket, the soldier would tamp the charge, ball and wad to create some compression.

The rifle could be loaded in the same manner, but accurate aimed shots required a little more finesse in the loading procedure. Special greased patches were used, and fine grained and specially dried powder, held in the rifleman's loading horn, exclusively for the priming of the piece.

A prerequisite of good marksmanship was to prevent at all costs the saltpetre content of the gunpowder from becoming damp. For example, if a measured quantity of gunpowder were left in the open air for only a short time, having previously been weighed, after only a few hours the weight would have increased considerably due to the amount of moisture in the atmosphere having been absorbed by the powder. Whilst in the field it was essential to 'keep your powder dry' as the old saying goes, for damp gunpowder will either not ignite, or not throw the projectile as far as required. The reverse seems also to be true, since after a few shots the barrel of the rifle would heat up considerably and consequently the

charges of gunpowder could be made smaller to avoid unnecessary recoil and waste of powder.

Gunpowder was supplied in either glazed or unglazed form, the difference being in the fineness of the grains and the fact that the glazed powder grains were encased in a form of shell. The glazed grains were polished, which had the effect of protecting them more from the damp, but glazed powder was more difficult to ignite.

The lead for the manufacture of balls was of the purest and softest form available. It was sold in 'pigs' and sent to the market in this form, and was to be preferred at all times to the lead from old pipes, gutters and roof coverings so often used. It was important that the lead balls be free from any impurities that might affect the smooth surface of the finished ball, which in turn might have affected the flight of the projectile once it left the mouth of the rifle.

It was also of prime importance that prior to being poured into the moulds that the lead was just the right temperature. If it was too hot when it came into contact with the mould it would cool too rapidly and produce an unequal ball with hollows and irregularities.

During the loading process of the rifle a small greased patch would be wrapped around the ball. This was usually a small piece of leather which the rifleman carried in the brass-plated container on the butt of the Baker rifle. The patch was meant to fill up the spaces around the grooves, which otherwise had the effect of creating too much windage. The requirements of a good patch were equal strength and thickness throughout, so that the indents on the ball may be of unvaried depth and breadth on every side of the ball's surface or zone.

Patches were not only made of leather such as kid skin, but were also made of calico, dimity, russia duck, fustian (a form of loose woven canvas) and thickset. The grease was placed on the underside of the patch only, in order to make contact with the grooves of the barrel and thus reduce friction.

On campaign a sentry at night might have used a stopple, to prevent the charge in his rifle from becoming damp due to the effects of long exposure to the atmosphere. A stopple was a small piece of thick card or felt accurately cut to the bore of the rifle and placed between the powder charge and the

greased patch and ball to try and counterbalance the effects of the atmosphere.

With every discharge of the rifle some of the grains of powder were blown out of the barrel unignited. Additional powder was soon found only to produce additional unignited grains. As a rule the rifle was charged with powder amounting to 1/5 or 1/4 of the weight of the lead ball, tests having shown that a man's shoulder soon became sore from the recoil of larger charges, resulting in the rifleman involuntarily shrinking from the expected blow of the recoil and affecting his aim. Taking aim with the rifle and the firing positions adopted were all laid down in the training manual of the Rifles devised by Colonel William Stuart and known as the 'Green Book'. Most of the principles involved have survived in the British Army to this day as any former or serving infantryman will be able to tell you.

The first position was the prone position, either supported or unsupported, using the cover of a bank or tree, and always trying to fire from the right so that the body would be covered and present less of a target itself to the enemy skirmishers. The next was the kneeling position using the elbow as a form of rest on the left knee. Another form of kneeling supported position was also used, which utilised the regulation ramrod. By placing the flat nose of the ram into the hollow of the hip and placing the other end into one of the retaining pipes on the stock of the rifle, an excellent rest could be formed.

Whilst taking the photographs for this article we discovered what an effective position this really was as the rifleman could maintain the position with comfort for a considerable period. Other positions such as the sitting position and the standing firing position are all still used and taught to this day, and are all based on the principles of William Stuart.

Great care was taken over the cleanliness and maintenance of the rifle. Each man was issued a cleaning kit consisting of the following: a picker and brush for clearing the flash plan and touch hole of the black and grey carbon deposits that accumulated after a few shots; rag and tallow; a spiral brush of hog's hair which could be attached to the regulation ramrod for cleaning of the rifled grooves; a cleanser of crimped brass wire and a

#### Key to photos overleaf:

##### Top left:

Another form of the kneeling firing position, as taught to the riflemen: note the way he supports the stock of the rifle with the ram rod. The ram rod was tucked into the hip and used as a makeshift rest. We discovered what an excellent position this really was when posing for this particular photograph as the rifleman could hold this position almost indefinitely without any great feeling of fatigue.

##### Top right:

The sitting position. The knees are drawn up to form rests for the elbows; again, this position as with most of the others is still taught to all new infantry recruits, along with the necessary control of the lungs and breathing required to fire well aimed shots.

##### Bottom left:

Clear right-hand view of the rifleman's kit and equipment. Note the butt end of the Baker rifle with its brass plate, which was a cover for the small box which would have carried the greased patches necessary for accurate shots.

##### Bottom right:

The standing position, still practised by the British Army to this day, as any serving or former infantryman will be able to tell you; the feet should be well apart, with the left leg well braced and slightly bent if possible. The firer leans slightly forward, with the butt of the rifle tucked firmly into the shoulder.

small container of oil.

The 95th fought in all the major campaigns of the British Army throughout the Napoleonic wars, from the battle of Copenhagen to most of the major actions in the Peninsula from the celebrated rearguard action during the retreat to Corunna, to the campaigns in North and South America, and finally at the greatest battle of them all at Waterloo where they fought against tremendous odds and won.

Men like the Dorsetshire shepherd boy turned rifleman such as John Harris, who left behind a marvellous account of his exploits in the 95th, and was first attracted to the Rifles by their green uniforms and the 'smart, dashing, devil may care appearance' of the regiment, are long since crumbled into dust and their memory almost forgotten in the mellowing of time, but many of their traditions still live to this day in the form of the Royal Green Jackets, who still remain 'first in, last out'. **MI**







# SS-Feldgendarmerie

GORDON WILLIAMSON

THE GERMAN Military Field Police, usually portrayed as brutal thugs who would hang a man at the drop of a hat, may — the author argues — have been rather misrepresented. Further comment from former soldiers on this little-researched subject would be welcome.

OF ALL THE purely military formations fielded by Germany in World War II, few are perceived as having such a bad reputation as the apparently much hated Feldgendarmerie or Military Field Police. If we are to believe the picture painted by many lurid war novels and several movies about the War, these troops would appear to be almost omnipotent thugs who delighted in instilling terror into the average soldier, who might well end up hanged from the nearest suitable tree or lamppost if his travel papers were found to contain the slightest error.

In fact, this sort of impression of the hated 'Kettenhunde' is patent nonsense.

But if this were indeed the view of the Feldgendarmerie held by the ordinary soldier, what would they think of the Feldgendarmerie of Himmler's dreaded SS? Surely these SS-Feldgendarmen would be even more feared. Certainly these particular troops may have had

wider authority than their British or US counterparts, but they were not the all-powerful figures of popular war fiction. The truth, inevitably, lies somewhere in between.

On the outbreak of war in 1939, the Wehrmacht mobilised its Military Policemen, recruited in the main from former civilian policemen with an existing knowledge of law and legal procedure. A Feldgendarmerie Trupp or Kompanie was attached to each Army division and higher formations such as at Korps level. As the field formations of the SS were initially fairly small units, usually attached to a parent Army division for tactical and administrative reasons, they had no need of their own Feldgendarmerie and were policed by Army Feldgendarmerie units.

As Hitler prepared for his offensive in the West, however, many of the SS units were considerably strengthened and it was at this point that the first SS-Feldgendarmerie units were allocated to the field formations. By this time, at least three SS units were at full divisional status, the SS-Verfügungsddivision (later to become the élite 'Das Reich' Division), the 'Totenkopf' Division and the 'Polizei' Division.

The smaller Leibstandarte

did not receive its Feldgendarmerie element until August 1940. As the Leibstandarte at this time was at the strength of a brigade rather than a division it received only a platoon-sized Feldgendarmerie unit consisting of one officer, four NCOs and 36 men. They were equipped with just one Volkswagen Kubelwagen and 11 motorcycle/sidecar combinations. When the Leibstandarte reached full divisional strength its Feldgendarmerie element was expanded to Kompanie size, comprising three platoons. The Feldgendarmerie Kompanie was commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hildebrand until 1943 when he was replaced by SS-Obersturmführer Rosenstengel.

The SS-Feldgendarmerie elements of the Waffen-SS divisions were considered as a part of the divisional staff, and were numbered for the division; therefore the Feldgendarmerie element of the 2 SS-Panzer Division 'Das Reich' was SS-Feldgendarmerie Kompanie 2 and that of 17 SS-Panzer Grenadier Division 'Götz von Berlichingen' was SS-Feldgendarmerie Kompanie 17.

Each of the higher formations of the Waffen-SS (ie at Korps level) also had Feldgendarmerie elements attached, numbered in the 100s; ie I SS Panzer Korps = SS-Feldgendarmerie Trupp (mot.) 101, III (germanisches) Panzer Korps = SS-Feldgendarmerie Trupp (mot.) 103.

It should be noted that it was the military commander (ie the divisional or Korps commander) who was responsible for military discipline, and the SS-Feldgendarmerie was merely the tool he used to maintain that discipline. The SS-Feldgendarmerie implemented the commander's decisions on such matters and did not set policy itself. The maintenance of a particularly strict disci-

A rare photograph showing the issue of the 'Feldgendarmerie' cuffband to members of the SS-Feldgendarmerie Kompanie 17 from 17 SS-Panzer Grenadier Division 'Götz von Berlichingen'. Despite the SS-pattern cuffband being in existence at this time, the unit was issued with Army pattern bands. (Lösel.)

pline, or the opposite case, would be dependent on the military commander's policy.

The principal tasks of the SS-Feldgendarmerie were the same as those of their Army counterparts, namely such varied duties as control of Military Traffic; initial handling of enemy PoWs; maintenance of divisional supply routes and military signposting; prevention of looting; prevention of sabotage; apprehending deserters, anti-partisan duties, etc.

In effect, during wartime their greatest task was to maintain and secure the divisional supply lines and organise military movements. Problems of indiscipline within the troops such as dress offences, drunkenness, etc, were not major problems in a combat situation and occurred more often when the soldier was home on leave. They were therefore more likely to be dealt with by Army Feldgendarmerie patrols under the auspices of the local military District Kommandantur. Indeed, at least one member of the Waffen-SS consulted by the author claimed never to have seen an SS-Feldgendarme, but had had his travel papers, etc, checked numerous times, when home on leave, by Army Feldgendarmerie troops. Generally, soldiers arrested for offences by the Feldgendarmerie were then handed over to their own unit for punishment.

A number of other formations also wore a metal gorget plate as a symbol of their spe-



SS-Hauptsturmführer Oskar Lösel, Chef der SS-Feldgendarmerie Kompanie 17. As his Dienstaussweis shows, Herr Lösel was a professional career police officer before being transferred to the SS-Feldgendarmerie, this being a very common situation. (Lösel.)





cial status, ie, the Feldgendarmerie des Heeres, Feldgendarmerie der Luftwaffe, Zugwachabteilungen, Bahnhofs wache, Kommandantur guard troops, Feldjägerkorps and Panzerwarndienst, so one must be wary of identifying troops in old wartime photographs as Feldgendarmerie merely because they appear to be wearing a gorget plate or Ringkragen. In most cases, however, such personnel probably were from the Feldgendarmerie.

As many Feldgendarmerie units were at the disposal of higher military commands, they were often 'lent out' to be used in security and police actions and photos do exist of Feldgendarmen present at the execution of suspected partisans by German troops.

Sorties of the so-called 'Flying Courts-Martial' operating at the tail end of the war and summarily executing soldiers whose papers were not in order as deserters and defeatists are often thought to refer to SS-Feldgendarmerie. These units were more often from troops from the Feldkommandostelle RFSS or troops at Himmler's personal disposal. (It must be said, however, that the Feldkommandostelle RFSS did include a small Feldgendarmerie element.) At least one photo of such a unit 'in action' at an execution of an

*Detail view of an M36 pattern fieldblouse of an SS-Stabsscharführer of SS-Feldgendarmerie. Note the use of the standard SS pattern sleeve eagle with the later SS issue type cuffband.*

alleged deserter shows personnel wearing a plain black collar patch suggesting that they were in fact from the Sicherheitsdienst or SD.

The general dislike or ambivalence towards Military Policemen is of course common in every army. Certainly the German MP of World War II was not a soldier to be treated lightly as his powers were considerable. It does appear, though, that the 'Kettenhunde' have had somewhat of a 'bad press'. The author has contacted a number of surviving Feldgendarmen of the Heer, Luftwaffe and Waffen-SS and also a number of German veterans who have had experiences with the Feldgendarmerie and the picture which emerges is of a soldier who was by no means beloved by his fellow soldiers but one whom the German soldier knew was absolutely essential to military operations. Whilst some at best considered them a 'necessary evil', others commented on how helpful and efficient the Feldgendarmen could be.

Unfortunately, due in part to the poor image many people have of the Feldgendarmerie, many are extremely reluctant to discuss their wartime service and this has led to a dearth of information on this branch of the German military. Few divisional histories even mention their Military Policemen despite the essential part they played in the legendary speed and mobility of German military units in World War II.

The author is preparing a book on the Feldgendarmerie units of the Heer, Luftwaffe and Waffen-SS in World War II and



would be delighted to hear from any reader with any documentary or photographic material on the subject, or indeed any remaining items of Feldgendarmerie regalia with which the book will also deal.

## INSIGNIA

### The Cuffband

Initially, the Feldgendarmerie attached to Waffen-SS units wore the standard Army issue Feldgendarmerie cuffband. This consisted of a 3.2cm wide band in mid-brown machine-woven cotton or artificial silk thread. It featured 2mm wide edging in pale grey weave and the legend 'Feldgendarmerie'

in pale grey gothic script lettering. This pattern was worn by all ranks including officers, and continued to be used even after the introduction of the SS-pattern cuffband.

In 1942, an SS pattern was introduced. Again machine-woven, it was in black artificial silk thread with a light silvery-grey edging and the legend 'SS-Feldgendarmerie' also in silvery-grey characters, this time in latin script rather than gothic.

In 1944, the use of both of these cuffbands was discontinued. Thereafter only the orange-red waffenfarbe worn by these troops, plus the use of the Ringkragen on duty, identified them as Feldgendarmerie.

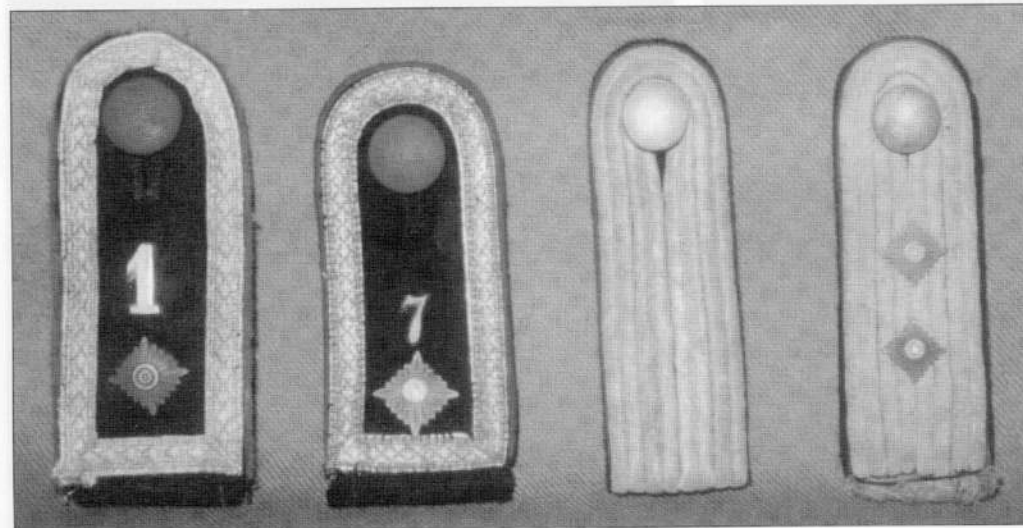
### The Arm Eagle

The Army-pattern Feldgendarmerie arm eagle, consisting of an orange thread machine-embroidered eagle and wreath, the eagle clutching a black thread swastika, all on a field grey backing, was authorised for use in the Waffen-SS. However, photographic evidence of its use, though it does exist, is rare, and it seems that most SS-Feldgendarmen continued to use the standard SS-pattern sleeve eagle.

### Waffenfarbe

The SS-Feldgendarmerie used the same orange-red waffenfarbe or branch of service colour as their Army counter-

*A selection of SS-Feldgendarmerie shoulder straps. Left to right: SS-Oberscharführer of SS-Feldgendarmerie Kompanie 1 (Leibstandarte); SS-Oberscharführer of SS-Feldgendarmerie Kompanie 7 ('Prinz Eugen'); SS-Untersturmführer, slip-on variety; and SS-Hauptsturmführer, sewn-in variety.*





The Army-pattern Feldgendarmarie cuffband, frequently worn by Waffen-SS personnel.

parts. It was featured as piping to the shoulder straps of other ranks and NCOs, and as secondary underlay, between the matt grey braid and the black base cloth, of officers' shoulder straps. It can also be found, though rarely, as piping to the crown and band of the peaked service cap, and occasionally as an inverted chevron around the SS deathhead insignia on the field cap.

#### The Gorget

The gorget worn by SS-Feldgendarmen was the same as worn by their Army counterparts. Unlike the Luftwaffe, which introduced a version bearing the Luftwaffe style 'flying' eagle, no such special version was introduced for the SS-Feldgendarmarie. The author has examined a single example bearing an SS style eagle, but although the gorget itself was certainly original, the SS type eagle was almost certainly a post-war 'fantasy' addition to enhance a fairly common item and thus fraudulently increase its value.

The standard pattern of gorget was a half-moon-shaped sheet steel stamping with a carved rim to increase strength. To this plate were added a button at each end, a large Wehrmacht-pattern eagle and swastika in the centre, and a scroll bearing the legend 'Feldgendarmarie' below the eagle. The plate was finished in a silver grey paint, the eagle, buttons and lettering in yellowish-green luminous paint, and the scroll in dark grey.

The reverse face was covered in field grey cloth or thin card so that the various prongs attaching the insignia to the plate would not snag on the wearer's uniform.

The gorget was suspended around the wearer's neck by a plain chain which gave the German Military Police their nickname 'Kettenhunde' or 'Chain Dogs'.

The gorget was only worn by Feldgendarmen when engaged in their duties and was rarely if ever worn by officers.

#### Armament

The personal armament of the average SS-Feldgendarme was rarely the ubiquitous MP38/40 as often shown in movies. Close examination of wartime photographs as well as the appropriate pages of original Soldbücher issued to Feldgendarmen indicate that a typical issue of personal

# Feldgendarmarie



#### Above:

SS-Feldgendarmen from the 'Totenkopf' Division serving on the Eastern Front. Note the Army-pattern cuffband. (Munin Verlag.)

#### Right:

SS-pattern Feldmütze with orange-red Feldgendarmarie waffenfarbe chevron around the deathhead insignia.



#### Bottom right:

The standard pattern Feldgendarmarie gorget.

weapons would comprise a 9mm pistol such as the P08 Luger or P38 Walther as well as a Kar 98k carbine with a single three-pocket ammunition pouch. The pistol holster would be on one side of the waistbelt and the three-pocket rifle pouch on the other. This applied to all ranks up to and including Warrant Officer grades. Senior NCO and officer ranks would often elect to wear a smaller calibre pistol such as the Walther PP or Mauser Hsc.

MI





# The Samaritans with Emerald Green Chevrons

JOHN P. LANGELLIER

IN THE YEAR 1857 the United States Army began to regularise the uniforms for enlisted men who had been allowed since 1851 to serve in the fledgling medical corps. Their principal distinction was emerald green chevrons but many other uniform changes took place over the next 30 years, as described here.

BY 1881, ONE more dress item came into being, a spiked helmet which was to replace the cap with pompon. At first, the general orders which introduced this headpiece called for the front of the helmet to bear the long-standing wreath and 'US', but this mandate soon changed to a large sheet brass eagle insignia that displayed a German silver caduceus.<sup>16</sup> Sheet brass side buttons, also featuring this device, were to be placed on each side of the helmet to hold the black chinstrap, with its brass slide buckle, in place.

As of late 1882, the German silver caduceus likewise replaced the Roman 'US' in the wreath for the forage cap, although it appears that this change did not go into effect immediately.<sup>17</sup> It was late in 1882 when the Quartermaster General announced that German silver caduceus devices were to be placed on the green facings of the collar, too.<sup>18</sup> Whether this order actually was followed, however, remains uncertain.

In fact, a trend towards streamlining was taking hold by this time, as evidenced by an 1883 decision which deleted the branch of service trim from the blouse.<sup>19</sup> The year 1883 further witnessed the placement of chevrons below the elbow on overcoats and ended the use of service stripes on overcoats and blouses.<sup>20</sup>

By 1884, another insignia, a 16 inches-long three inches-wide white cloth brassard with a two-inch by two-inch red cross in the centre, evidently was the exception to the rule, since this 'arm-badge' was prescribed for all neutrals to be worn above the elbow, on the left arm, 'in addition to insignia

designating the military rank of the wearer'.<sup>21</sup> In 1885, when the army authorised the position of acting hospital stewards, at those posts 'where there is no hospital steward', the duty and grade was to be indicated by the brassard, but by this time the device was to be displayed on the left cuff.<sup>22</sup>

This was not the only new insignia of rank to appear in the mid-1880s. The adoption of gold lace chevrons for dress coats of all branches ushered in a special hospital steward's green cloth half chevrons which bore a similarity to the old pattern except that the 1884 version was to be 'bound with gold tracing braid on each edge, and with caduceus embroidered with gold-thread' in the centre.<sup>23</sup>

Following closely on the heels of the new insignia came another dress coat pattern. This time, the collar was faced all the way around with green piped in white, rather than the four-inch patch previously sewn to both sides of the front of the collar. The skirt facings were longer than the 1872-pattern and the front seams which ran vertically from waist were deleted. In addition, the new 1884-pattern enlisted button was called for and the belt loops were to be dispensed with, as were 'any collar insignia previously authorised'.<sup>24</sup>

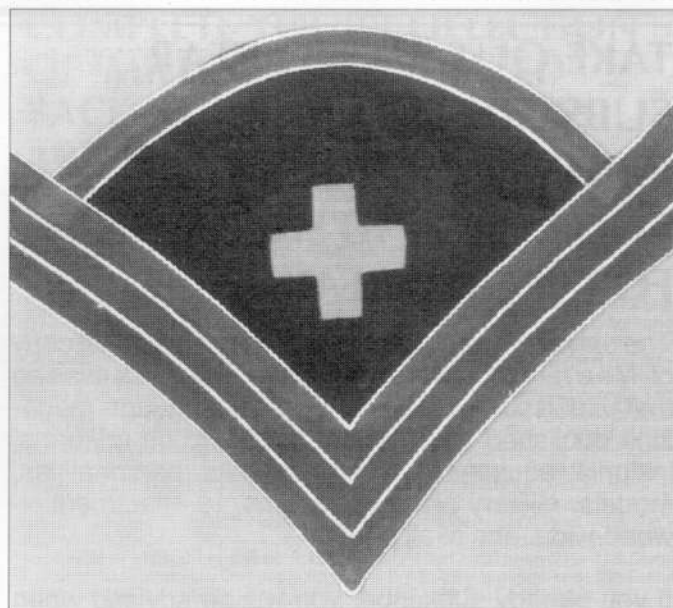
Following closely on the heels of the new insignia came another dress coat pattern. This time, the collar was faced all the way around with green piped in white, rather than the four-inch patch previously sewn to both sides of the front of the collar. The skirt facings were longer than the 1872-pattern and the front seams which ran vertically from waist were deleted. In addition, the new 1884-pattern enlisted button was called for and the belt loops were to be dispensed with, as were any collar insignia previously authorised.<sup>24</sup>

This basic design of coat remained in force for more than



*From 1884 through 1887 the dress coats of hospital stewards bore a pair of emerald green chevrons with outer edges bound in gold and with the centres embroidered in gold thread to form a caduceus. (Presidio Army Museum, Presidio of San Francisco.)*





The background of the 1887-97-pattern dress chevron for hospital stewards was emerald green with gold bullion stripes worn points down and an arc of the same material overhead. The cross was of scarlet facing material applied behind a cut-out of dark blue uniform material which matched the cloth of the coat itself. (Presidio Army Museum, Presidio of San Francisco.)

a dozen years. The only major changes came about in 1887 when staff pattern buttons and new gold lace chevrons with an arc over a Geneva cross was prescribed for hospital stewards, while the latter device sans arc was provided for acting hospital stewards. Moreover, the collars of acting hospital stewards exhibited small cloth Geneva crosses made of scarlet facing material. Finally, there was a dress coat for the newly created position of privates, who were authorised with the establishment of the Hospital Corps in 1887.<sup>25</sup>

At that same time, a German silver Geneva cross replaced the caduceus as a helmet overlay and the same motif was affixed to the helmet side buttons as a separate insignia, a feature unique to the medical enlisted personnel. Another distinguishing mark came about in 1887 with the substitution of dark blue wool trousers to match the uniform coats for the Hospital Corps in lieu of the lighter shades worn by all other branches. Trousers stripes were thereafter to be emerald green piped with white, those of hospital stewards measuring 1 1/4 inches wide, for acting hospital stewards one inch wide, and for privates a half inch wide.

The dark trousers with their two-tone stripes also were called for in tandem with the

garrison and fatigue uniform, as were cloth chevrons of emerald green with a red cross in the centre or the white arm band on the left sleeve. The forage cap with a German silver cross enclosed by a wreath was regulation for hospital stewards, while the cross without the wreath served for all others. With these specification, enlisted medical personnel had come into their own as a distinct element of the army, the uniform changes between 1857 to 1887 reflecting the evolutionary process which led to the creation of the Hospital Corps. **MI**

#### Notes

1. General Orders No 53, Adjutant General's Office, 31 October 1851. Hereafter cited as GO No, AGO, date.
2. GO No 2, AGO, 28 February 1857.
3. LTC William K. Emerson, USA, 'A Short History of Some U.S. Medical Insignia Part 1: Doctors and Enlisted Insignia, XXXVI Military Collector and Historian No 2 (Summer, 1984); p57.
4. Frederick P. Todd, *American Military Equipage 1851-1872*, Vol 1 (Providence, RI: The Company of Military Historians, 1974), pp56-66 discuss the patterns introduced in 1858.
5. Joseph J. Woodward, MD, *The Hospital Steward's Manual* (Philadelphia, 1863)
6. Todd, *American Military Equipage*, Vol III, p395.
7. GO No 40, AGO, 9 April 1867. It is probable that none of these devices ever were manufactured.
8. There was one exception, however; a regimental hospital steward rank was authorised in 1867 to consist of chevrons made according to the wearer's branch with a circle bearing a blue embroidered caduceus in the centre. This insignia was short-lived, being on the books for less than four years, and may never have been issued

on a widespread basis, if at all.

9. GO No 92, AGO, 26 October 1872.

10. GO No 107, AGO, 14 December 1872; *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1877*, Vol I, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1877), pp266-267.

11. GO No 21, AGO, 29 March, 1876, stated, 'Chevrons, similar to those prescribed for the uniform-coat, will be worn by non-commissioned officers upon both sleeves of their blouses'.

12. See Edgar M. Howell, *United States Army Headgear, 1855-1902: Catalog of United States Army Uniforms in the Collections of the Smithsonian Institution*, II (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office); pp48-59 should be consulted for more on the 1872 forage cap, and the 1872 as well as 1876 campaign hats.

14. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1876* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1876), p205. Hereafter noted as ARSW with year and date.

15. *Ibid*, p204.

16. GO No 76, AGO, 23 July 1879. In point of fact, some enlisted men had taken it upon themselves to line their capes before this time, and thus the general order simply authorised this impracticable.

17. GO No 4, AGO, 7 January 1881; GO No 52, AGO, 14 June 1881; GO No 43, AGO, 12 April 1882.

18. GO No 9, AGO, 27 January 1882.

19. ARSW, 1882, p52.

20. GO No 45, AGO, 26 June 1883. This blouse was to have a falling collar of from two to three inches in depth with rounded corners. There were five large 1855-pattern buttons down the front of this single-breasted sack coat, with one small 1855-pattern button on the outer seam of each cuff, one and three-quarter-inches from the edge. Specification 92, 19 May 1883. The revised specifications for this blouse (No 100), issued on 16 January 1884, did not mention the

*Cloth chevrons were prescribed for the overcoat and blouse with the red cross centre as of 1887. This is the style for hospital stewards. (Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum.)*

small cuff buttons. A year later, the Secretary of War made a decision to have three small buttons applied under the seam of the sleeves of enlisted blouse cuffs, which was in keeping with the long-standing usage by officers and which many rank and file had followed without authorisation prior to that time. Circular No 12, AGO, 31 December 1885.

21. GO No 38, AGO, 6 June 1883.

22. GO No 90, AGO, 8 August 1884. Also see Specification No 149, 30 June 1885.

23. GO No 62, AGO, 4 June 1885.

24. GO No 107, AGO, 12 September 1884.

25. ARSW, 1885, p673 noted that these changes were approved on 5 March 1885 and became Specification No 131. Also see record Group 92, Quartermaster Clothing and Equipment Letters sent, Entry 1009, National Archives, Washington, DC, Vol 1, 1885, 211 Holabird to Ludington, 10 March 1885 authorising the new 'fine gilt' button for use on the dress coat from that date forward.

26. GO No 56, AGO, 11 August 1887.

#### Forage cap, 1861-1870s





**Dalmatian Croatian Warrior,  
late 9th Century**

